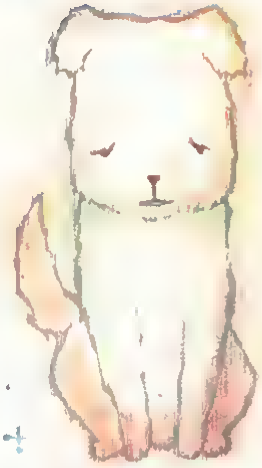
しろいくも

岩岡ヒサエ



しろいくも

岩岡ヒサエ

IKKI COMIX

小学館

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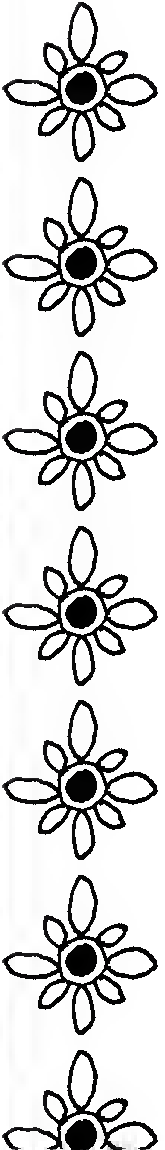
雑誌 45905-31　小学館

逝ってしまったおばあさんが残した
たったひとつのもの——
それを慈しむおじいさんと犬の静かな時間。
表題作「しろいくも」を含む、
鮮烈な〝ものがたり〟全14作を収録。
伝えたい情景を豊かに描く新鋭著者の初単行本。

Kumo
Translations
Scans&Editing

Shiroi Kumo

Iwaoka Hisae



Shiroi Kumo

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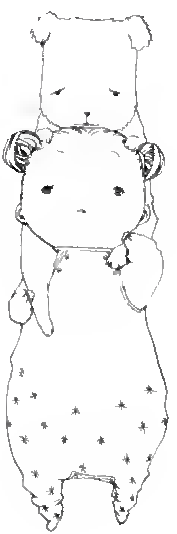


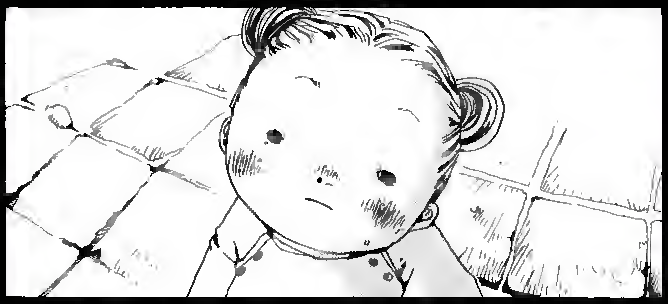
"Once Upon a Time"

THERE WAS A LOST LITTLE GIRL.

"....."

"....."

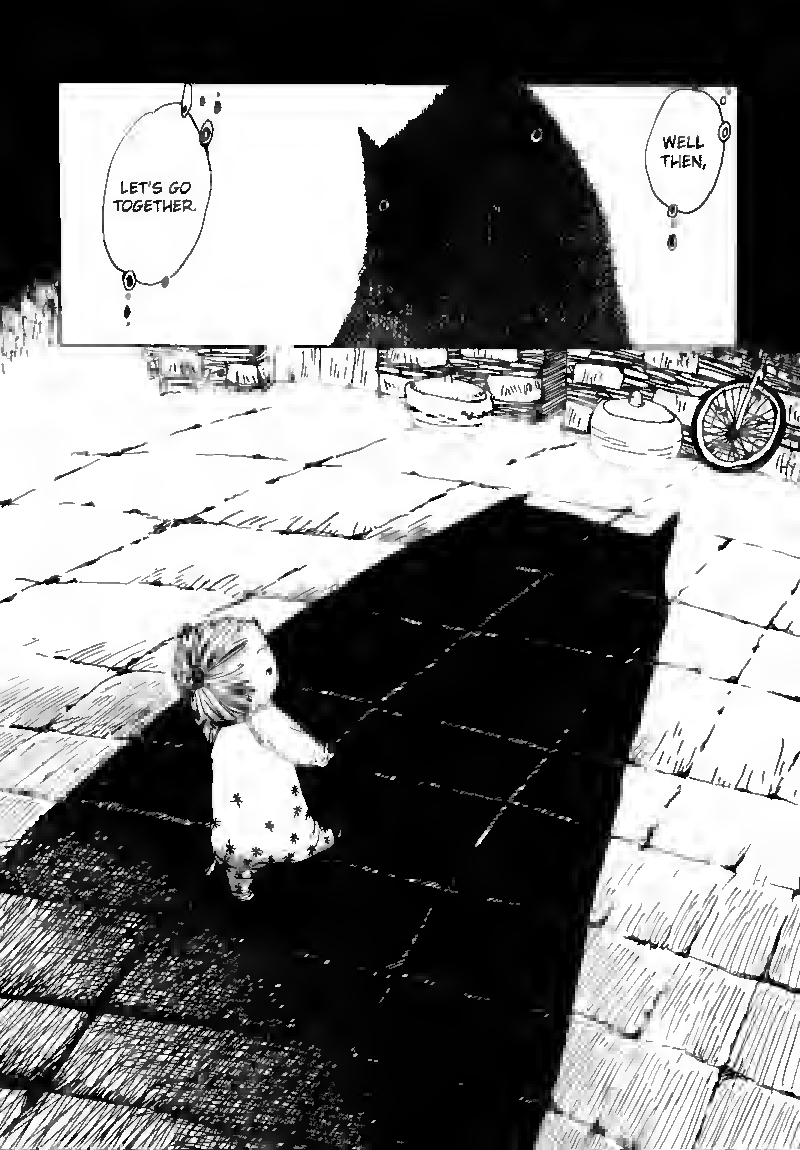
A SINGLE PILLOW CAME ALONG,



AND SAID TO THE LITTLE GIRL,

"NIGHT WILL FALL SOON. GO HOME."

"BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET HOME..."


LET'S GO TOGETHER.
WELL THEN,

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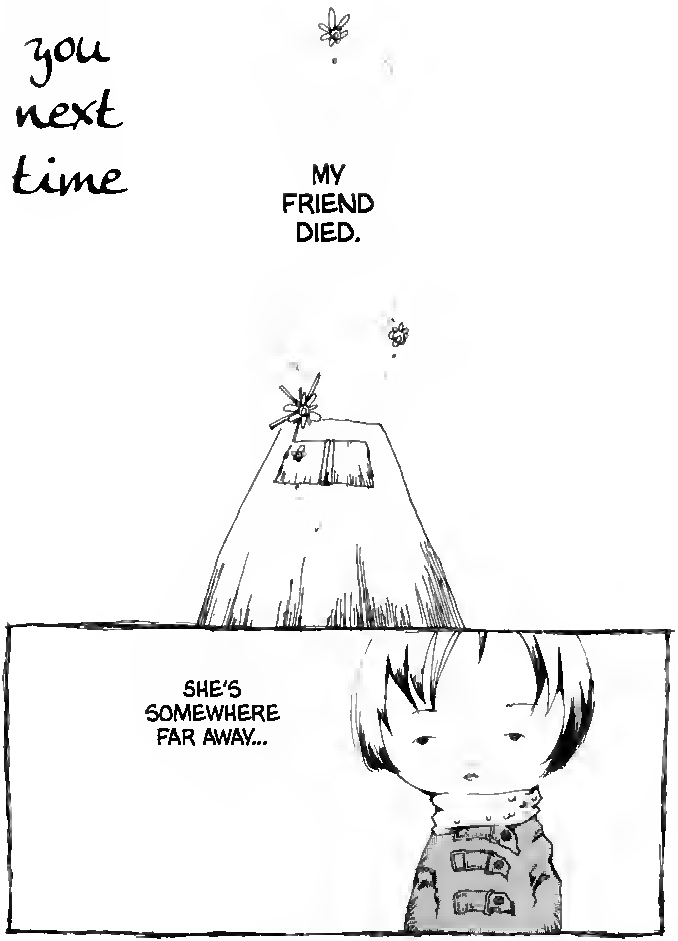
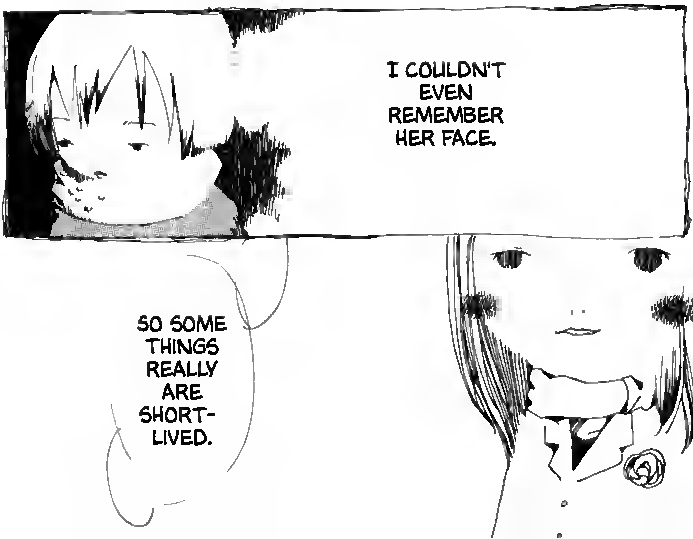
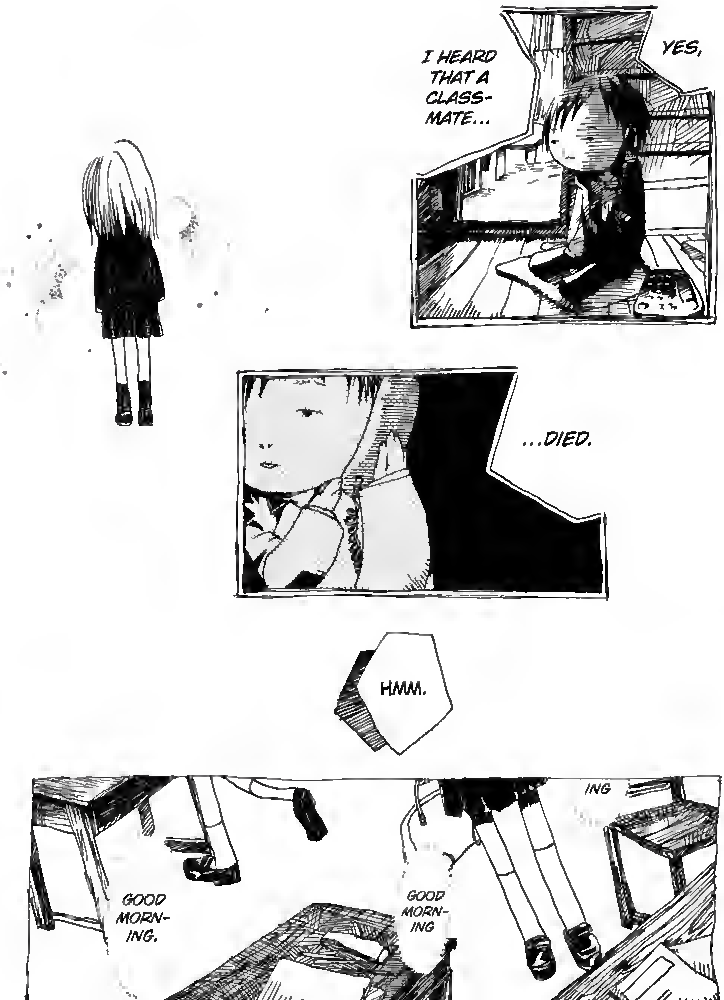
See you next time

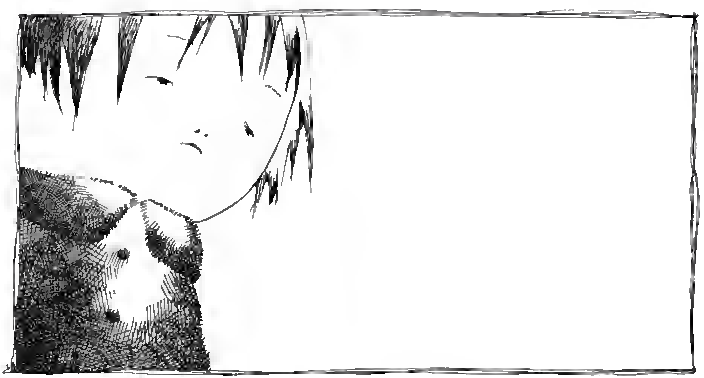


SADLY,
AT
FIRST,


I COULDN'T
EVEN
REMEMBER
HER FACE.
SO SOME
THINGS
REALLY
ARE
SHORT-
LIVED.


I HEARD THAT A CLASS-MATE...
YES,
...DIED.
HMM.
GOOD MORN-ING.
GOOD MORN-ING
ING

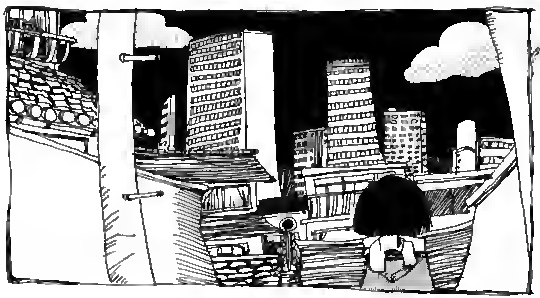
GOOD MORNING.



I COULDN'T SENSE ANYTHING FROM HER COFFIN.

HERS WAS A DISTANT EXISTENCE I HAD LONG FORGOTTEN, BUT...

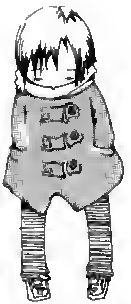
I PICTURED HER FACE AS IT DIMLY CAME TO MIND.



I THOUGHT ABOUT HOW I DIDN'T WANT HER TO DIE.

MAYBE IF HER FAMILY AND FRIENDS AND TEACHERS AND PEOPLE WHO HEARD THE NEWS...

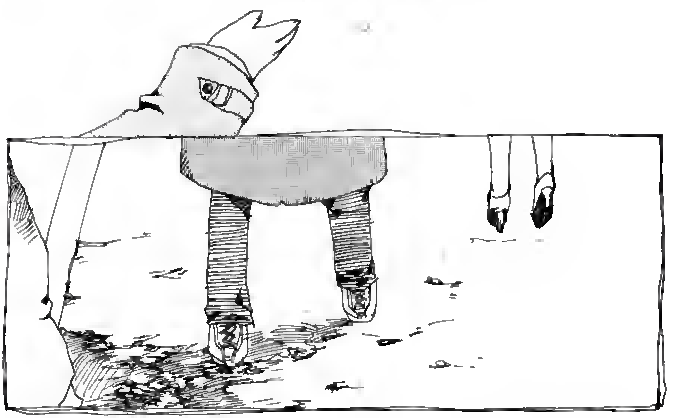
IF THEY HELD ONTO THOUGHTS LIKE THAT, BIT BY BIT...



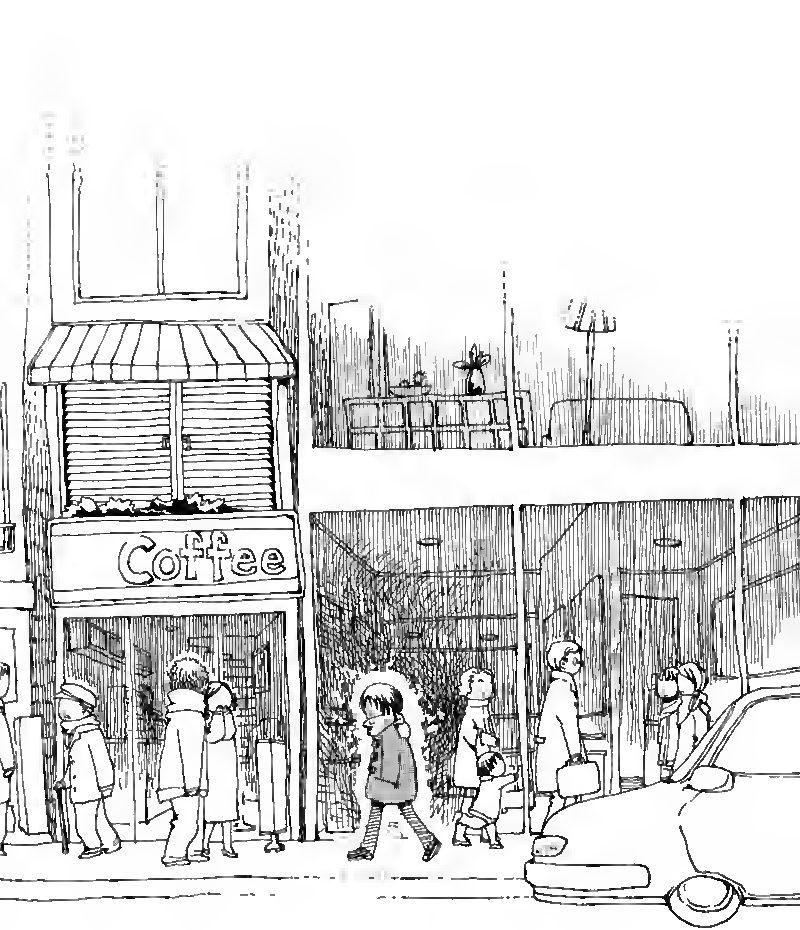
I THOUGHT THAT THEN MAYBE, OUT OF ALL THOSE THOUGHTS,
SHE MIGHT...
...MAKE HER WAY BACK HERE.
Hell.

GOOD NIGHT.

SEE YOU NEXT TIME...



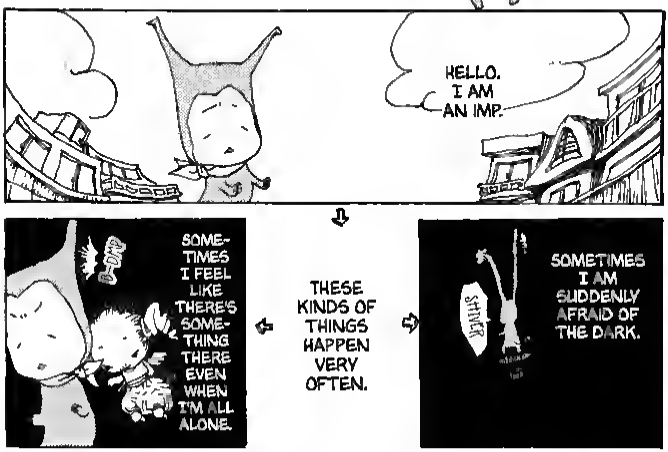
THAT'S WHAT I REALLY WANTED TO SAY...



20001212

Kumo
Translations
Scans&Editing

Imp in the Night


HELLO. I AM AN IMP.
SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING THERE EVEN WHEN I'M ALL ALONE.
THESE KINDS OF THINGS HAPPEN VERY OFTEN.
SHIVER
SOMETIMES I AM SUDDENLY AFRAID OF THE DARK.

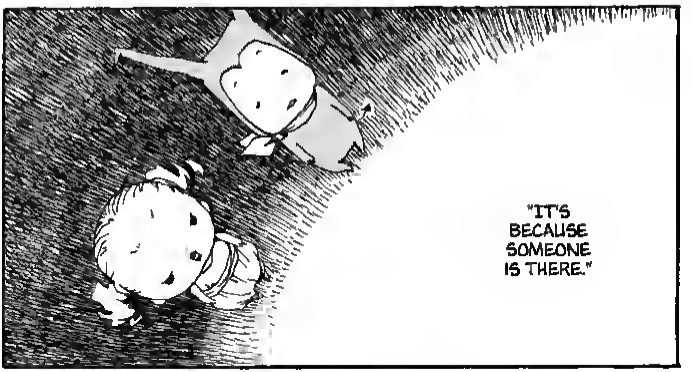
LET'S ASK SOMEONE ABOUT THE NIGHT. LET'S CALL OVER MR. PILLOW, WHO KNOWS A LOT ABOUT NIGHT-TIME.
THERE HE IS.
"IS THAT HOW YOU ACT WHEN YOU'RE ASKING SOMEONE SOME-THING? YOU JERK."
Mrrr Mrrr Mrrr Mrrr
TELL US, YOU JERK.
Fm Fm Fm Fmmm Ffffm Fmmm
Fmmm!
Fmmm...

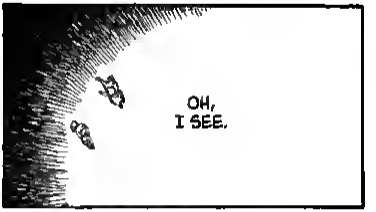
MR. PILLOW, COULD YOU PLEASE TELL US?
MR. PILLOW'S JOB STARTS AT DUSK
DURING THE DAY, HE TALKS TO US LIKE THIS.
UM, WELL,
WHY IS THE NIGHT SO SCARY?

AT DUSK, AS THE WORLD CHANGES FROM CRIMSON TO AZURE,
THE FOOTSTEPS OF NIGHT QUIETLY, QUIETLY COME AROUND.
THE SHADOWS THAT DYE THE SKY MAKE IT DARK, SO DARK.

IT GETS CLOSER AND CLOSER.
BEFORE WE EVEN KNOW IT, WE'RE WRAPPED IN THE DARKNESS.
SO SCARY,
BUT AT THE SAME TIME, GENTLE?
WHY IS THE DARKNESS OF NIGHT...
HEY, MR. PILLOW, WHY?
AND THAT'S WHY YOUR HEART SKIPS A BEAT WHEN NIGHT FALLS.

mrr
mrr
"THE REASON WHY THE NIGHT IS GENTLE AND SCARY..."
mrr
mrr
room
"IS BECAUSE NO ONE IS THERE, DON'T YOU THINK? IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE ALL ALONE, DON'T YOU THINK?"

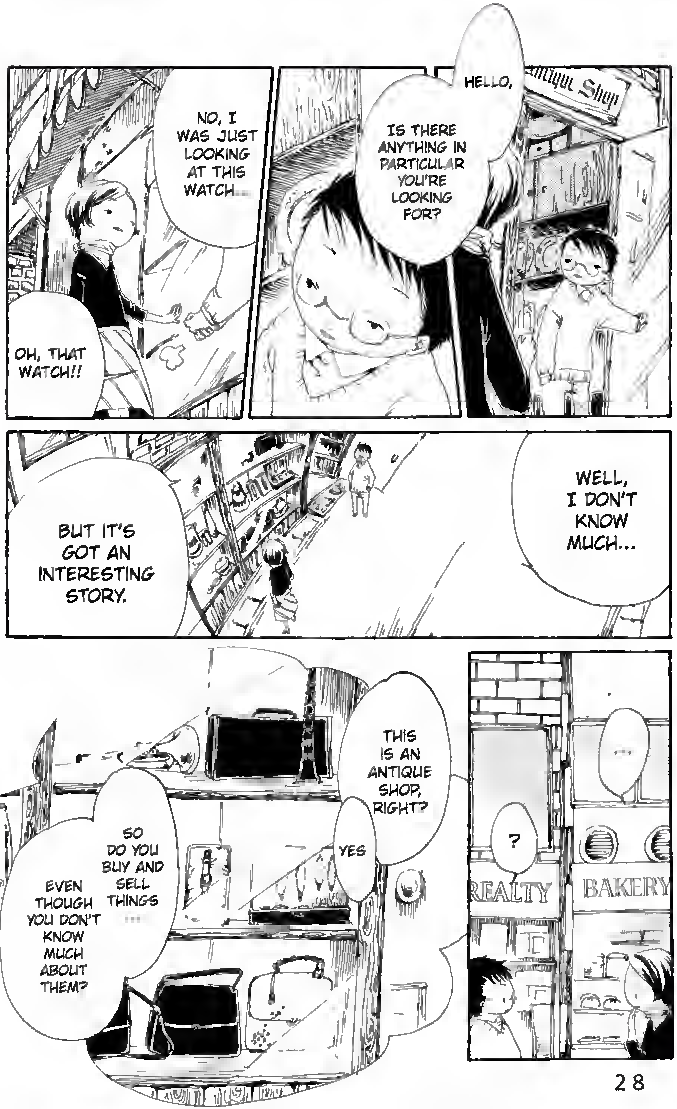

"IT'S BECAUSE SOMEONE IS THERE."


OH, I SEE.

RIGHT.

Kumo
Translations
Scans&Editing

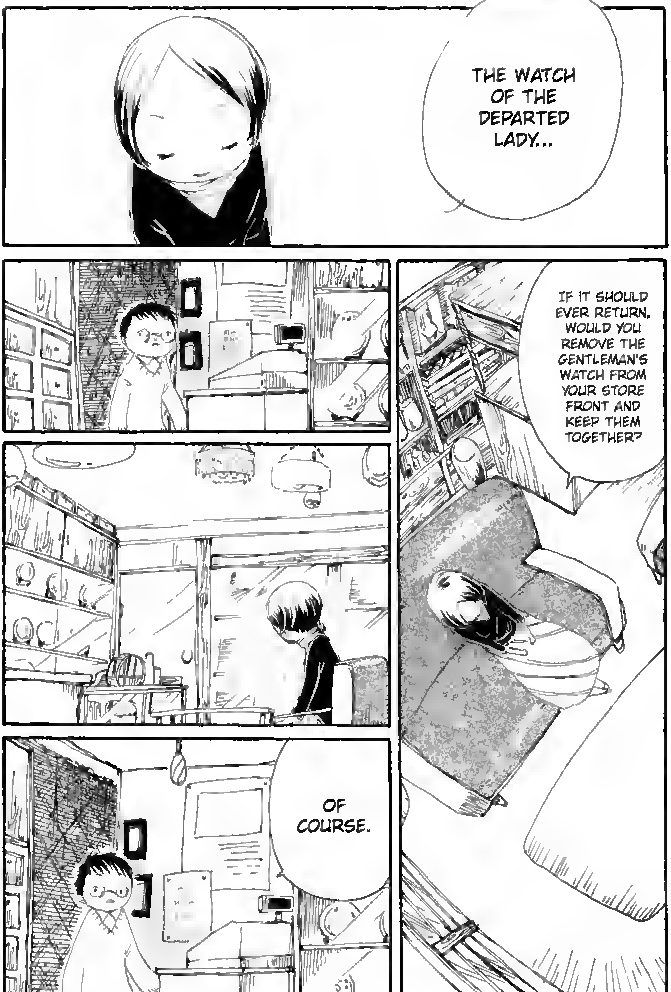
Sakura Antique Store

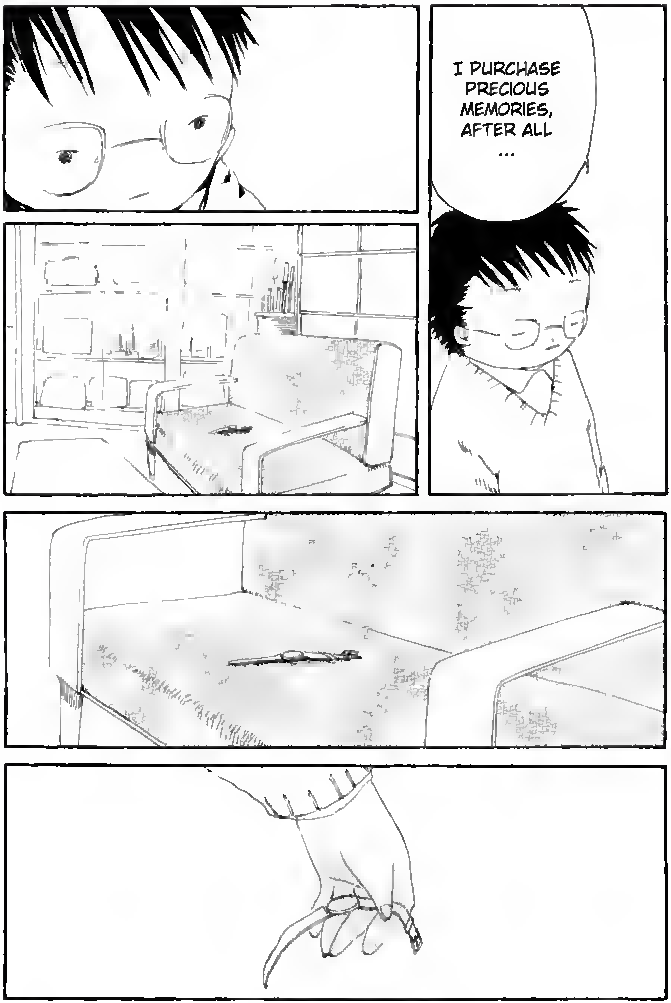

NO, I WAS JUST LOOKING AT THIS WATCH...
OH, THAT WATCH!!
HELLO, IS THERE ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?
Antique Shop
BUT IT'S GOT AN INTERESTING STORY.
WELL, I DON'T KNOW MUCH...
THIS IS AN ANTIQUE SHOP, RIGHT?
YES
SO DO YOU BUY AND SELL THINGS ...
EVEN THOUGH YOU DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THEM?
?
REALTY
BAKERY

IS IT JUST ME, OR ARE YOU SUDDENLY IN BUSINESS MODE?
THERE'S NO NEED TO STAND AND TALK
PLEASE, COME IN!
BUT THEY HAVE WONDERFUL STORIES.
THE WATCH YOU MENTIONED EARLIER.
IT USED TO BELONG TO A CERTAIN GENTLEMAN ACCORDING TO WHAT I HEARD,
THE GENTLEMAN AND HIS WIFE EACH HAD A WATCH SPECIALLY MADE TO COMMEMORATE THEIR MARRIAGE.

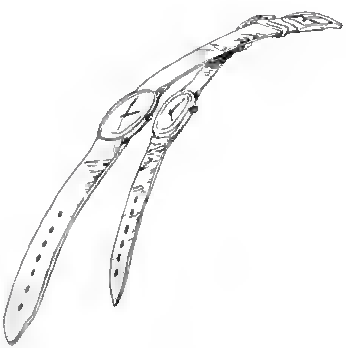
IT'S SO IMPORTANT TO ME THAT I CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO PUT IT ON...
TELL ME, DEAR.
WHY DON'T YOU EVER WEAR YOUR WATCH?
THE WATCH WAS SO IMPORTANT TO THE GENTLEMAN THAT HE ALWAYS LOCKED IT AWAY
SNIFF
BUT THE WISH COULD NOT BE FULFILLED...
Why are you crying?
IT WAS JUST A CASUAL REMARK
IT WOULD BE NICE IF YOU WOULD WEAR IT, EVEN JUST ONCE IN A WHILE...
BEFORE THE GENTLEMAN EVEN KNEW IT, HIS WIFE WAS BEDRIDDEN, STRICKEN WITH DISEASE.

?
MISS?
THE GENTLEMAN MOURNED, REGRETTING THAT HE HAD NEVER WORN THE WATCH WITH HER
THE WIFE AND HER WATCH HAD PASSED ON, LEAVING HIM BEHIND AND HIS WATCH EVENTUALLY FOUND ITS WAY HERE


THE WATCH OF THE DEPARTED LADY...
IF IT SHOULD EVER RETURN, WOULD YOU REMOVE THE GENTLEMAN'S WATCH FROM YOUR STORE FRONT AND KEEP THEM TOGETHER?
OF COURSE.


I PURCHASE PRECIOUS MEMORIES, AFTER ALL ...

WANTED TO BE WITH YOU.



END

My name is Shiro.

I was raised by Grandma.

しろいくも

White Clouds

I have been living in this house for 14 years.

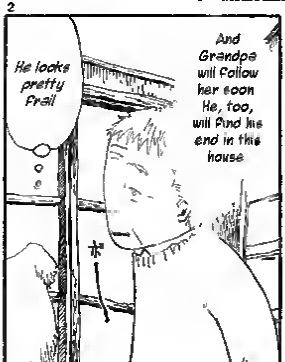
SHIRO

Grandpa and I have grown very close over time

Kotonoha
KOTONOHA.MONKEY-PIRATE.COM

Hisae Iwaoka

2

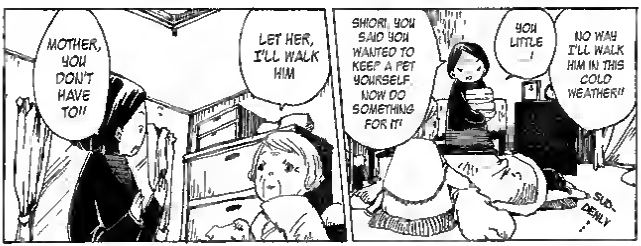


QC by erutan

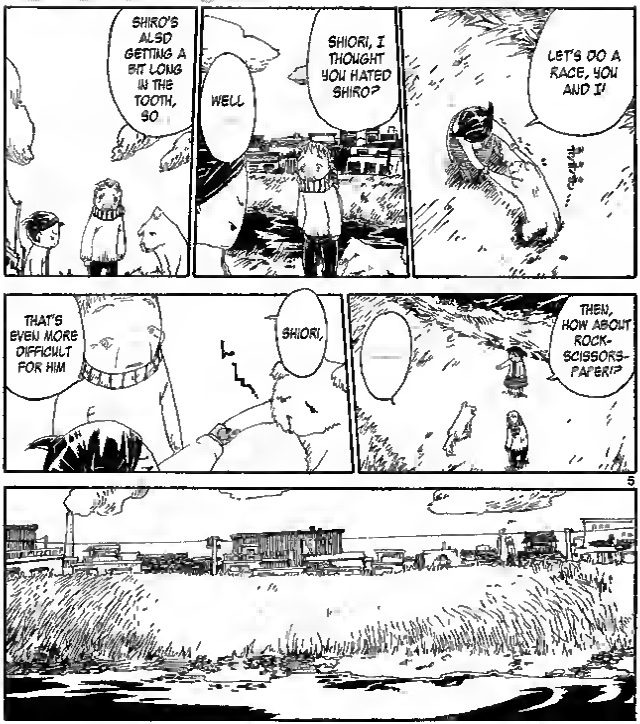
しろいくも

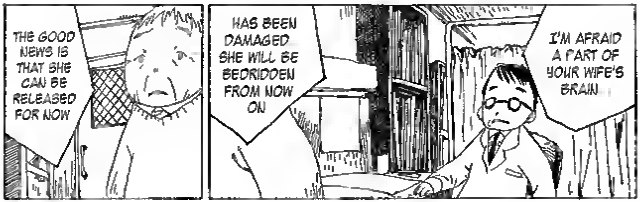
WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN US?
SURE
IT'S TIME TO WALK SHIRO
GRAND-PA!
GRANDPA !!
OH!
IT'S BECAUSE GRANDMA USED TO CARE FOR HIM LIKE HER CHILD
EEK!
ARE YOU LISTEN-ING?
I OO
YOU REALLY LIKE SHIRO, DON'T YOU?
This girl is Shiori. She spends a lot of time with Grandpa
WELL, HE STILL LOOKS FINE TO ME
I'VE GOT THE FEELING HE WAS STRONGER BEFORE
HE HAS?
HAVE YOU NOTICED THAT SHIRO'S BECOME QUITE SLOW RECENTLY?

It suddenly occurs to me
It'd be so much better if Grandma was here instead of Shiori!


MOTHER, YOU DON'T HAVE TO!!
LET HER, I'LL WALK HIM
SHIORI, YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO KEEP A PET YOURSELF. NOW DO SOMETHING FOR IT!
YOU LITTLE !
NO WAY I'LL WALK HIM IN THIS COLD WEATHER!!
SUDDENLY !

SHIRO
ALL RIGHT, SHIRO, READY TO GO?
OH?
SHIO!! NO!
SHIRO, LET'S ASK GRANDPA TO COME WITH US
HEEEY!
RUFF!


SHIRO'S ALSO GETTING A BIT LONG IN THE TOOTH, SO
WELL
SHIORI, I THOUGHT YOU HATED SHIRO?
LET'S DO A RACE, YOU AND I!
THAT'S EVEN MORE DIFFICULT FOR HIM
SHIORI,
THEN, HOW ABOUT ROCK-SCISSORS-PAPER!?
5

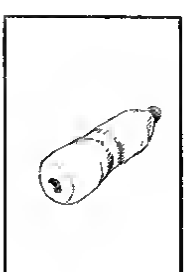

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT SHE CAN BE RELEASED FOR NOW
HAS BEEN DAMAGED SHE WILL BE BEDRIDDEN FROM NOW ON
I'M AFRAID A PART OF YOUR WIFE'S BRAIN

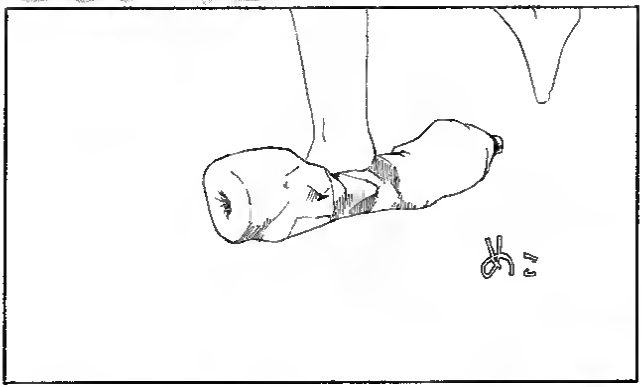
I'm sorry

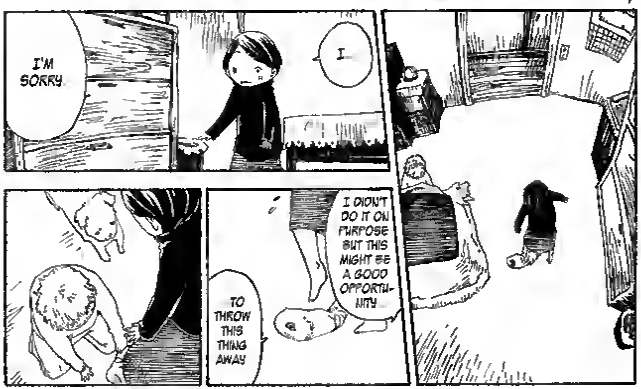
He did everything for her, no matter how hard it was
IT'S TIME TO CHANGE THIS.
From helping her eat to drying off her body.
Grandpa did everything he could

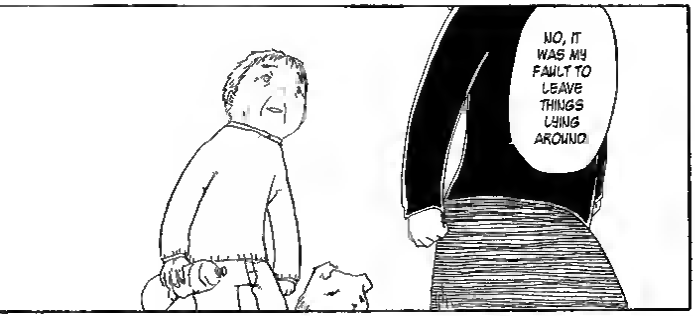
Sorry

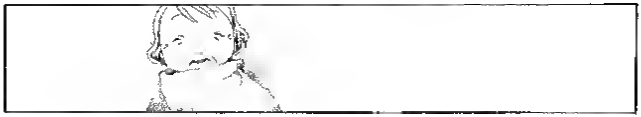
Thank you

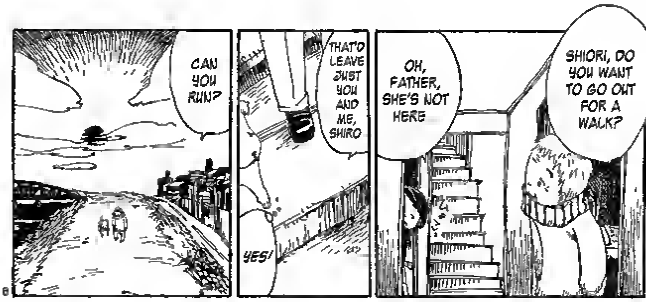


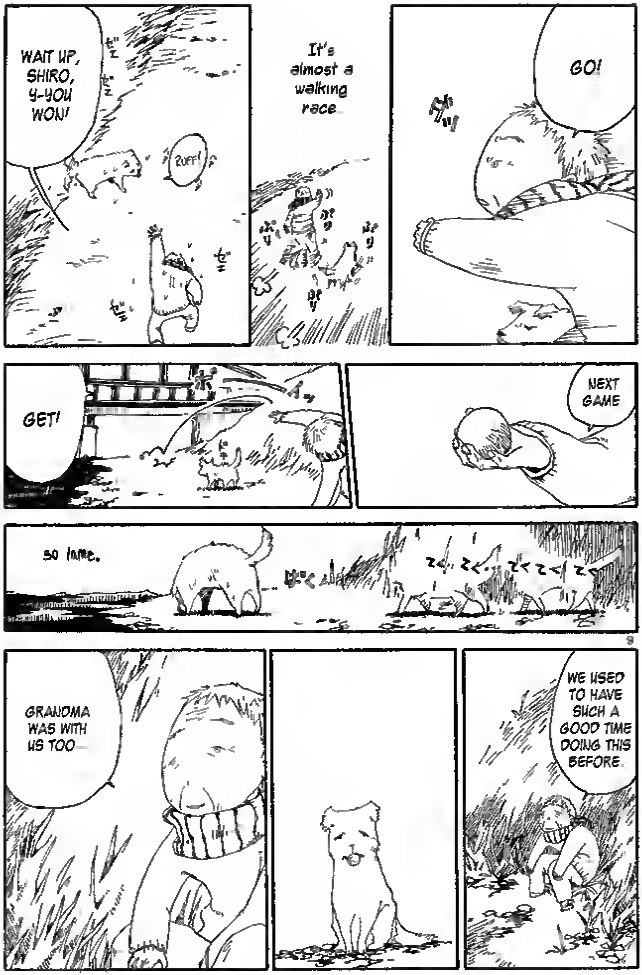


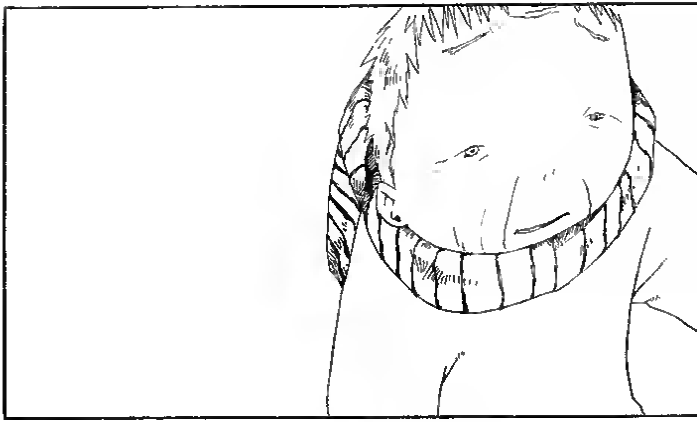

I'M SORRY
I...
I DIDN'T DO IT ON PURPOSE BUT THIS MIGHT BE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY
TO THROW THIS THING AWAY

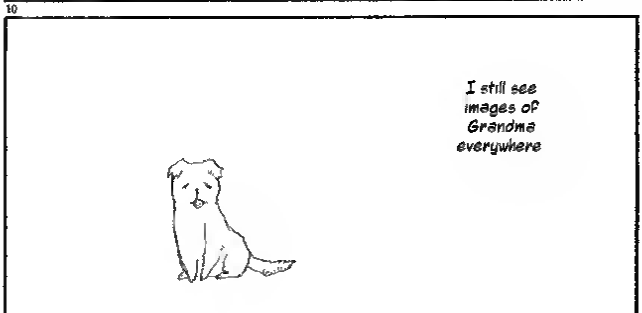

NO, IT WAS MY FAULT TO LEAVE THINGS LYING AROUND




CAN YOU RUN?
THAT'D LEAVE JUST YOU AND ME, SHIRO
YES!
OH, FATHER, SHE'S NOT HERE
SHIORI, DO YOU WANT TO GO OUT FOR A WALK?


WAIT UP, SHIRO, Y-YOU WON!
Zoom!
It's almost a walking race.
GO!
GET!
NEXT GAME
so lame.
9
GRANDMA WAS WITH US TOO...
WE USED TO HAVE SUCH A GOOD TIME DOING THIS BEFORE.




I still see
images of
Grandma
everywhere

しろいくも

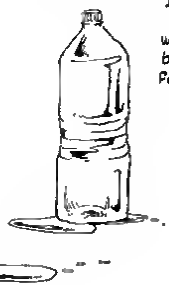
There are things I want to ask her about...

but she no longer answers me...

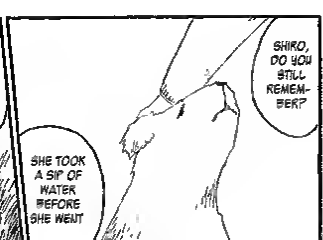
How she spilled her meal

How she slowly wandered about

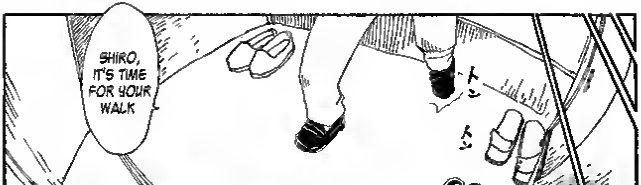
I knew she wouldn't be here forever,

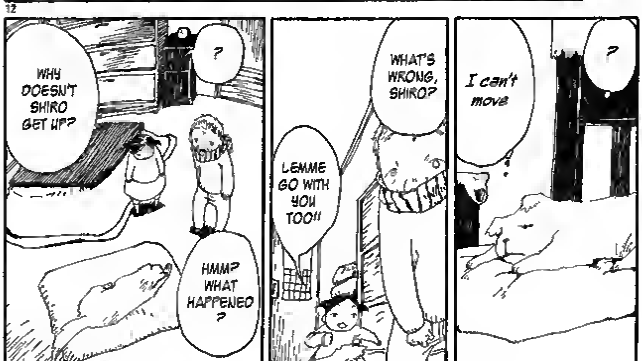


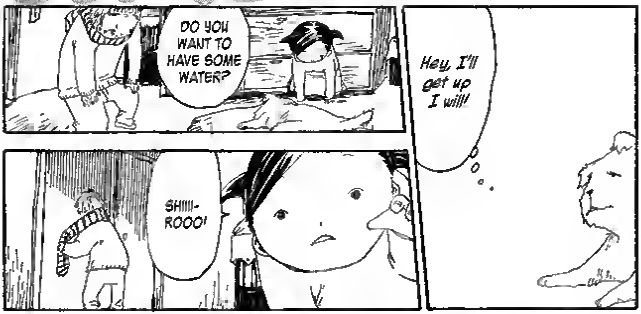
yet I couldn't help but cry bitterly on the day she left

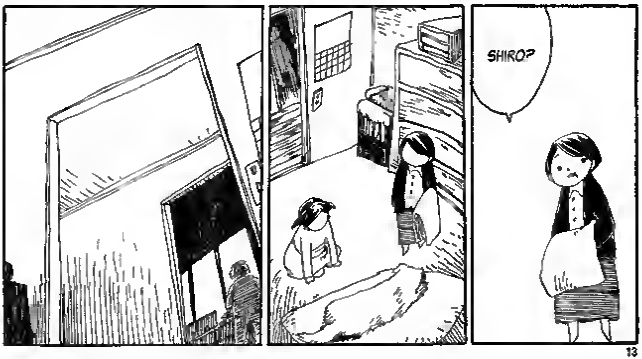


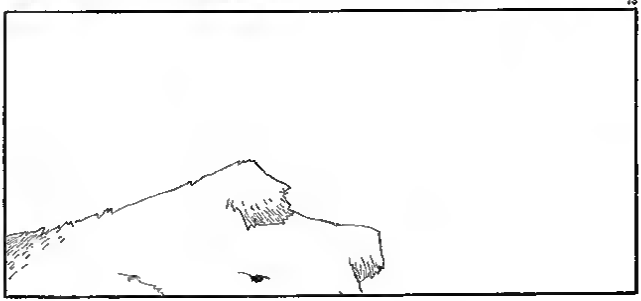
SO I GUESS IT SHOULD BE OKAY FOR ME TO KEEP THAT ONE THING FOR MYSELF.

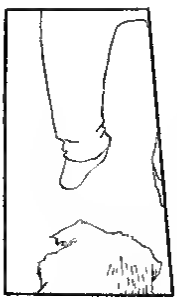

SHIRO, IT'S TIME FOR YOUR WALK
トン
ふぅ


WHY DOESN'T SHIRO GET UP?
?
HMM? WHAT HAPPENED?
LEMME GO WITH YOU TOO!!
WHAT'S WRONG, SHIRO?
I can't move
?

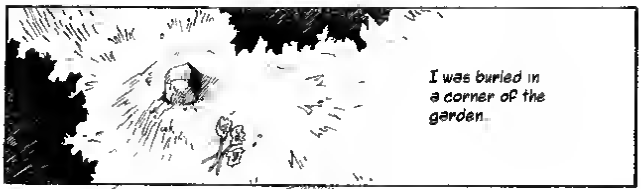

DO YOU WANT TO HAVE SOME WATER?
Hey, I'll get up I will!
SHIII-ROOO!


SHIRO?

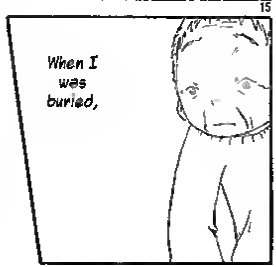


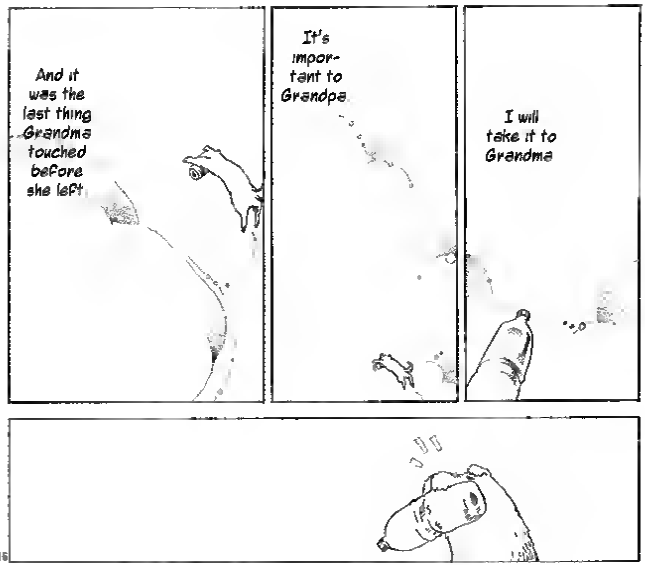


This is not fair


I was buried in a corner of the garden.

Grandpa passed that plastic bottle on to me.


When I was buried,



"White Clouds" – End

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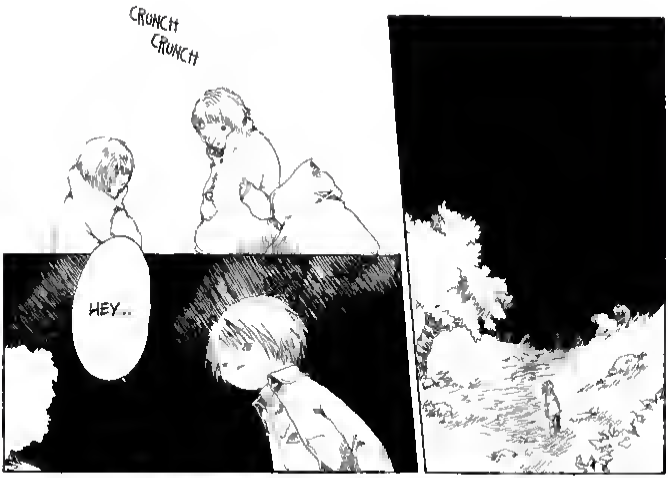
ONCE UPON A TIME...
HELLO?
IS ANYONE THERE?


CRUNCH
CRUNCH
HEY..

I HAVE COME FROM THE OTHER WORLD I AM A HUMAN
THIS IS A MOLEHILL, CORRECT?

Molehill

HUMAN!
It's a HUMAN!!
HUMAN!!
TRUDGE TRUDGE TRUDGE TRUDGE
Sniff Sniff
Sniff Sniff
THIS IS THE SCENT DESCRIBED IN THE ARCHIVES. THE SCENT OF A HUMAN.
HE LOOKS THE SAME AS US BUT HE HAS A HUMAN'S SCENT.

THAT PERSON IS LYING. .
I CAME OVER THE MOUNTAIN RANGE OVER THERE.
crunch
ARE MOLES THAT LIVE UNDERGROUND. WE HATE PEOPLE LIKE YOU WHO LIKE BEING OUT UNDER THE SUN
OH, MY. WE...
CRACK
THAT PERSON WAS ONCE MY BELOVED.

IN EXCHANGE FOR OUR EYES, OUR SENSE OF SMELL IS VERY ADVANCED WE KNOW EVERYTHING BY SCENT
HOW-EVER,
WE HAVE LONG LIVED WITHIN THE EARTH,
SO OUR EYES NO LONGER HAVE ANY USE
nuiffe nuiffe
nuiffe
nuiffe nuiffe
nuiffe
A LONG TIME AGO, A HUMAN KILLED ONE OF US
WE HATE YOUR SCENT

HE'S A HUMAN.
HOW DID HE FIND THIS PLACE?
THE MOLES WILL ONCE AGAIN BE SOLD OUT AND KILLED. THEY'RE HUMANS...
I CAN FAINTLY SMELL HIM.

AND WE COULDN'T EVEN SEE EACH OTHER'S FACES.
THAT OUR EYES COULD BARELY SEE,
BUT IT WAS SO DARK HERE...
AND THERE WAS HIS SCENT.
HIS HAND WAS WARM AND GENTLE,
THOUGH WE CERTAINLY WON'T WELCOME YOU
WELL, IF YOU WANT TO COME WITH US, DO WHAT YOU WANT
SWISH SWISH
SHZZZZ
SWISH SWISH

HUSH
SWISH
SWISH
WE RACE OF MOLES ARE OVERWHELMED BY FRETFULNESS WHEN WE LEAVE THE EARTH FOR TOO LONG.
WHY ARE YOU STILL HERE? HURRY UP AND RETURN TO THE EARTH

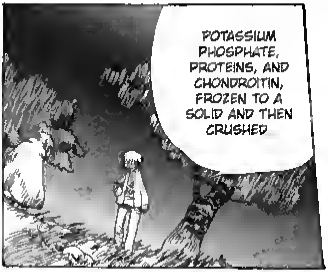
.....
YOU'RE NOT REALLY A HUMAN, ARE YOU?
.....
OF ALL THE THINGS TO SAY...
TAKE A GOOD HARD SNIFF. I HAVE THE SCENT OF A HUMAN DON'T I?

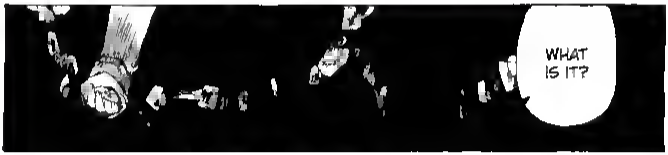
BUT WE COULDN'T BECOME FULLY HUMAN EVEN IF WE WANTED TO
WE CANNOT LIVE LONG OUT BENEATH THE SUN.
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU MADE THAT HUMAN SCENT,
NO. EVEN IF YOU HIDE IT, YOU STILL FAINTLY SMELL OF MOLE
.....
OUR SKIN WOULD BURN, AND WE WOULD SUFFER AND WRITHE IN PAIN AND DIE.
AND OUR BARE SKIN, WITHOUT FUR LIKE ANIMALS, DOES NOT HAVE ANY RESISTANCE AGAINST THE SUNLIGHT
OUR BODIES ARE UNUSED TO THE SUN.
REALIZE THAT IT'S ME. RECOGNIZE MY SCENT
BECAUSE YOU AREN'T A HUMAN—
WHO KNOWS WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IF A HUMAN DISCOVERED THAT YOU AREN'T A HUMAN.

IT'S SO DARK HERE,
I CAN BARELY SEE YOUR FACE
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
EVEN IF YOU CAN'T SEE ME, I'M HERE
THANK YOU.
I WONDER IF SHE'S SMILING RIGHT NOW.
I WONDER IF SHE'S SMILING FROM THE BOTTOM OF HER HEART FOR ME.
I'M WORRIED.
EVEN THOUGH I'M WITH YOU.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. YOU WORRY TOO MUCH.
EH?
I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU ARE.
LET'S HAVE A CHILD SOMEDAY.
IT'S SO DARK HERE... IT'S SO HARD IN THE DARKNESS
WE'RE PRACTICALLY BLIND AREN'T WE?
I'LL MAKE DINNER FOR THREE FOR YOU AND ME AND THE CHILD.
SO I'LL NEVER FORGET YOUR SCENT, NEVER EVER...

SO THAT EVEN IF I CAN'T SEE YOU, I'LL NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF YOU
I COULD SEE YOU SO MUCH BETTER.
BUT TO THINK, IF WE WERE JUST TO GO OUTSIDE INTO THE LIGHT,
I'LL BECOME A HUMAN
I COULD LEAVE THE EARTH
IF I BECOME A HUMAN,
I COULD GO OUTSIDE

?


POTASSIUM PHOSPHATE, PROTEINS, AND CHONDROITIN, FROZEN TO A SOLID AND THEN CRUSHED


WHAT IS IT?

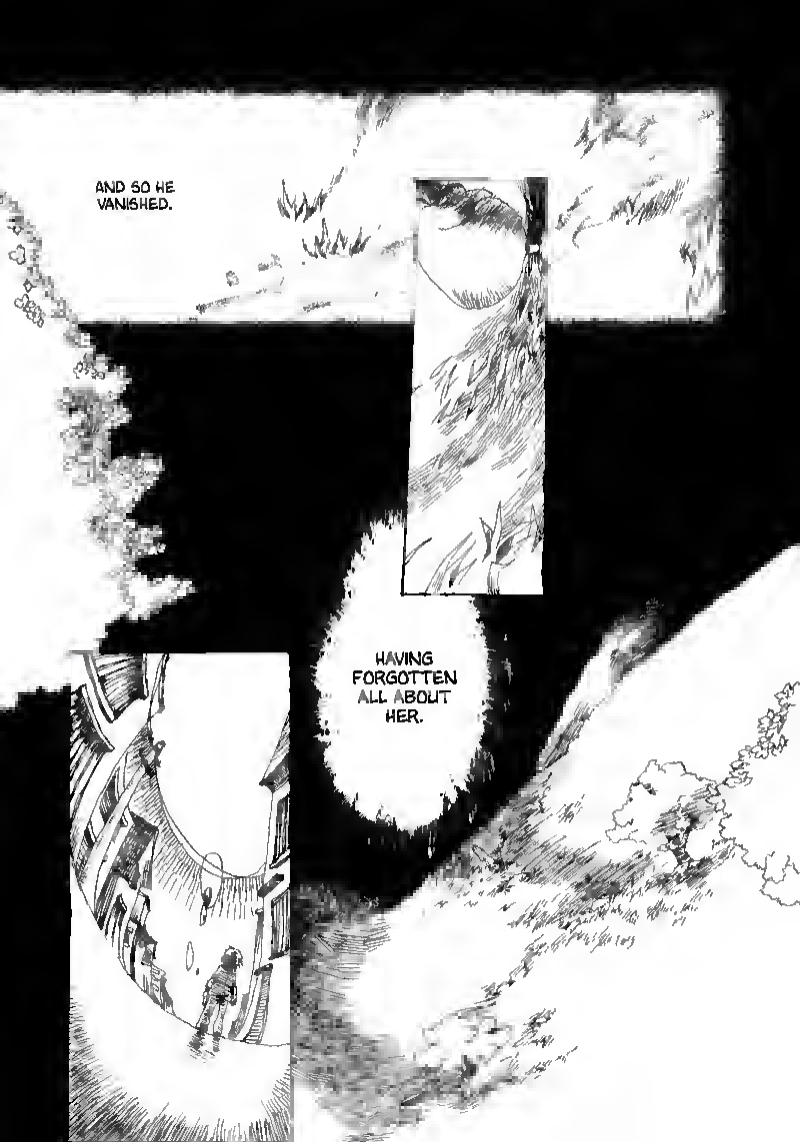
WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL THE POWDERED BONE OF A HUMAN

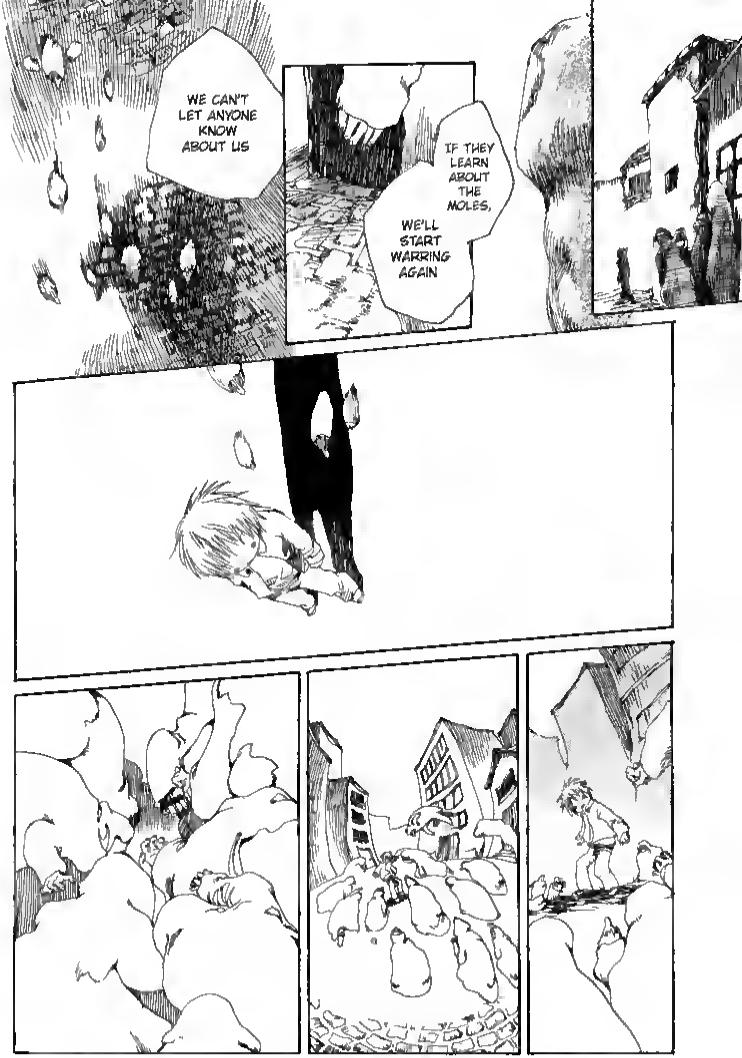
IN THIS HILL,
THERE USED TO BE HUMANS, TOO
HUMANS WHO DIED FIGHTING MOLES
IF YOU FIND THEIR BONES, CAREFULLY GRIND THEM TO A POWDER, AND COVER YOUR BODY WITH IT, YOU CAN BECOME A HUMAN
IT'S OVERWHELMINGLY REPETITIVE WORK, DOING THE SAME THING OVER AND OVER, ALL FOR THE SAKE OF MAKING YOURSELF SMELL LIKE A HUMAN
WHY ARE YOU SO DESPERATE TO BECOME A HUMAN?
BEATS ME
I'VE ALREADY FORGOTTEN. IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER

IF I HAVE THAT POWDER,
I CAN GO OUT INTO THE HUMAN WORLD.

I'M LEAVING THIS PLACE...
SHUT UP!! YOU'RE JUST A FOOL WHO THINKS OF NOTHING BUT LIVING IN THE GROUND!!
BUT IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO BE A HUMAN FOREVER.

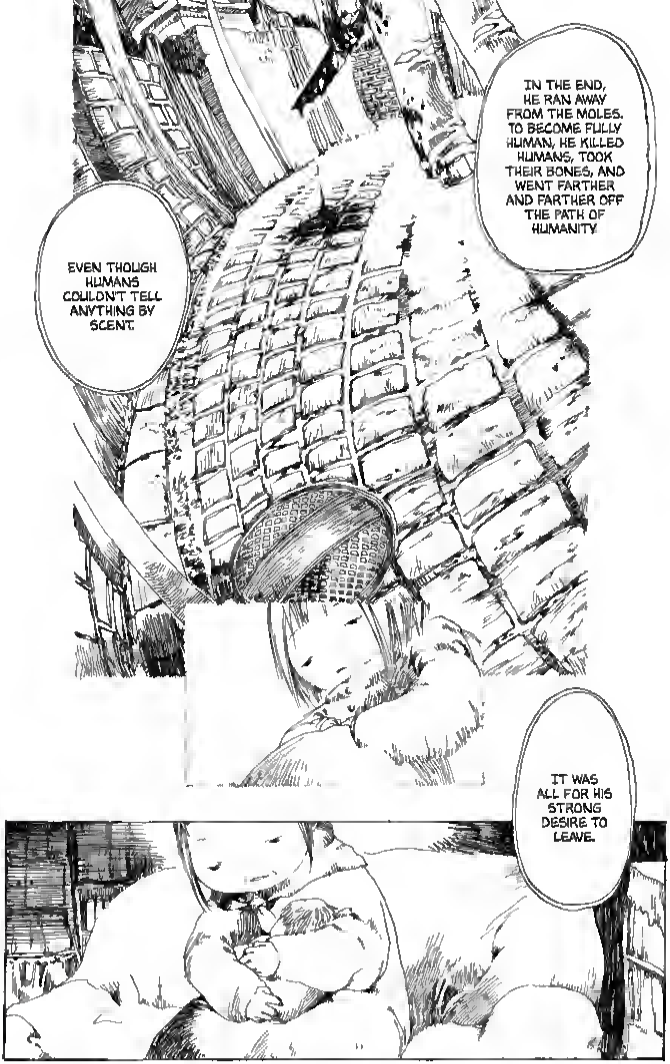
...I'M LEAVING THIS PLACE...

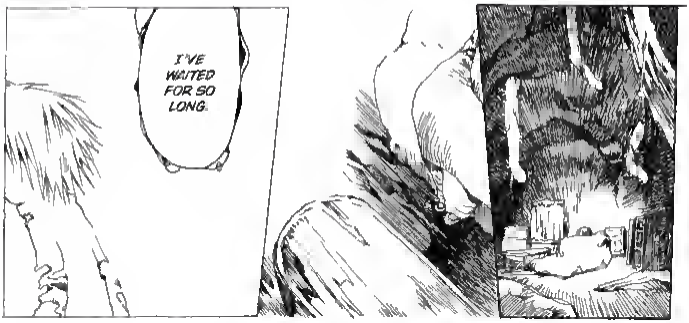

AND SO HE VANISHED.
HAVING FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT HER.


WE CAN'T LET ANYONE KNOW ABOUT US
IF THEY LEARN ABOUT THE MOLES,
WE'LL START WARRING AGAIN

"WHY DID YOU WANT TO BECOME A HUMAN?"
WHY DID I? IT'S SO FAR IN THE PAST THAT I CAN'T REMEMBER.

SOMETHING VERY
IMPORTANT,
SOMETHING...


IN THE END, HE RAN AWAY FROM THE MOLES. TO BECOME FULLY HUMAN, HE KILLED HUMANS, TOOK THEIR BONES, AND WENT FARTHER AND FARTHER OFF THE PATH OF HUMANITY.
EVEN THOUGH HUMANS COULDN'T TELL ANYTHING BY SCENT.
IT WAS ALL FOR HIS STRONG DESIRE TO LEAVE.


I'VE WAITED FOR SO LONG.

KISS.

AND SO THE TALE ENDS...
SHE NEVER KNEW...
...THAT SHE HERSELF WAS THE BEGINNING.
END

Kumo
Translations
Scans&Editing

I'M ALWAYS IN THE MIDST OF A DREAM, ALONE.

Land of Dreams

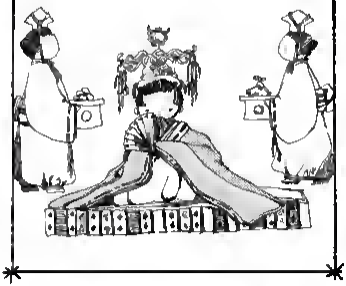
I WAKE UP, ONLY TO CLOSE MY EYES AGAIN.

SOMEDAY, I'D LIKE TO SEE...

WHAT HAPPENS...

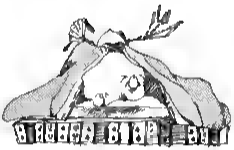
WHILE I'M SLEEPING.

IN MY DREAMS, I'M A PRINCESS.



LIVING A SHELTERED, STIFLING LIFE.

WHEN THE DAY CAME THAT I NO LONGER KNEW WHICH WAS REAL...

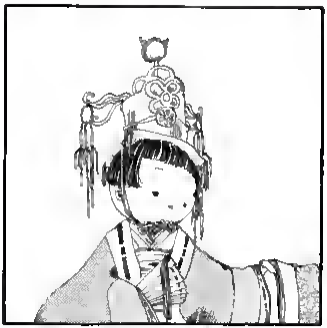


I SLOWLY CLOSED MY EYES AND RETURNED TO MY DREAM. I'M ALWAYS ALONE.

IF SOMEONE WERE TO TAKE MY HAND...

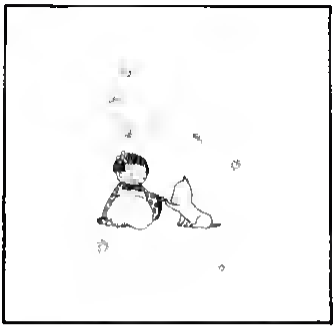
AND TELL ME THAT I WAS NEEDED...

I WOULD SQUEEZE YOUR HAND BACK,



AND SAY TO YOU,

"I NEED YOU, TOO."



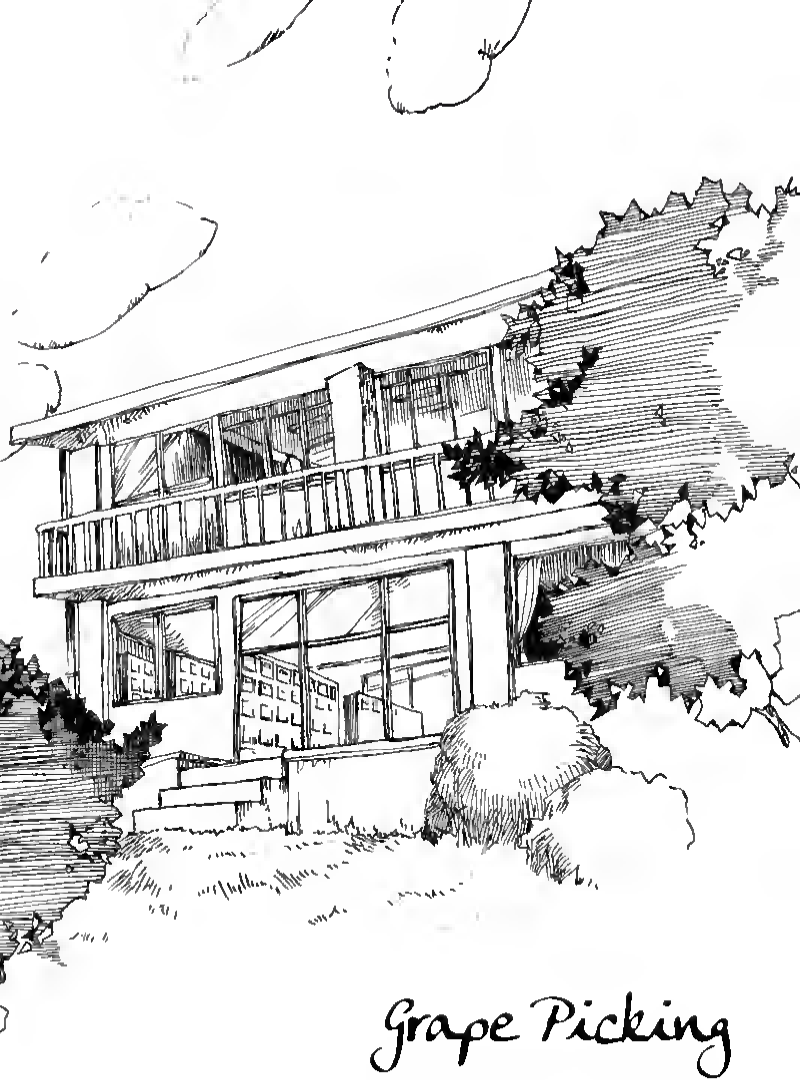
IT IS A DREAM WITH AN UNKNOWN END.

I WILL DREAM AGAIN TODAY.

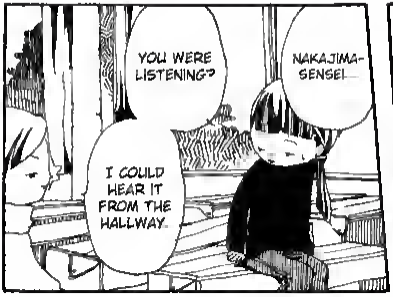
Kumo

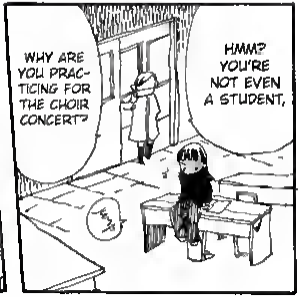
Translation,
Scans & Editing

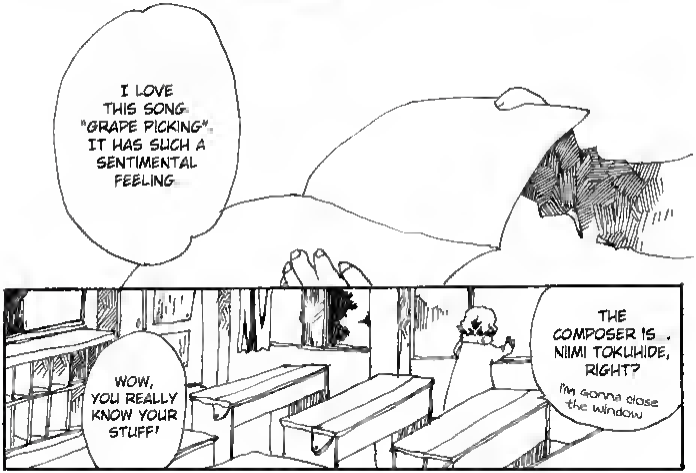
Grape Picking

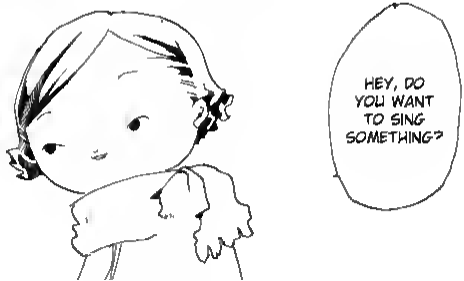


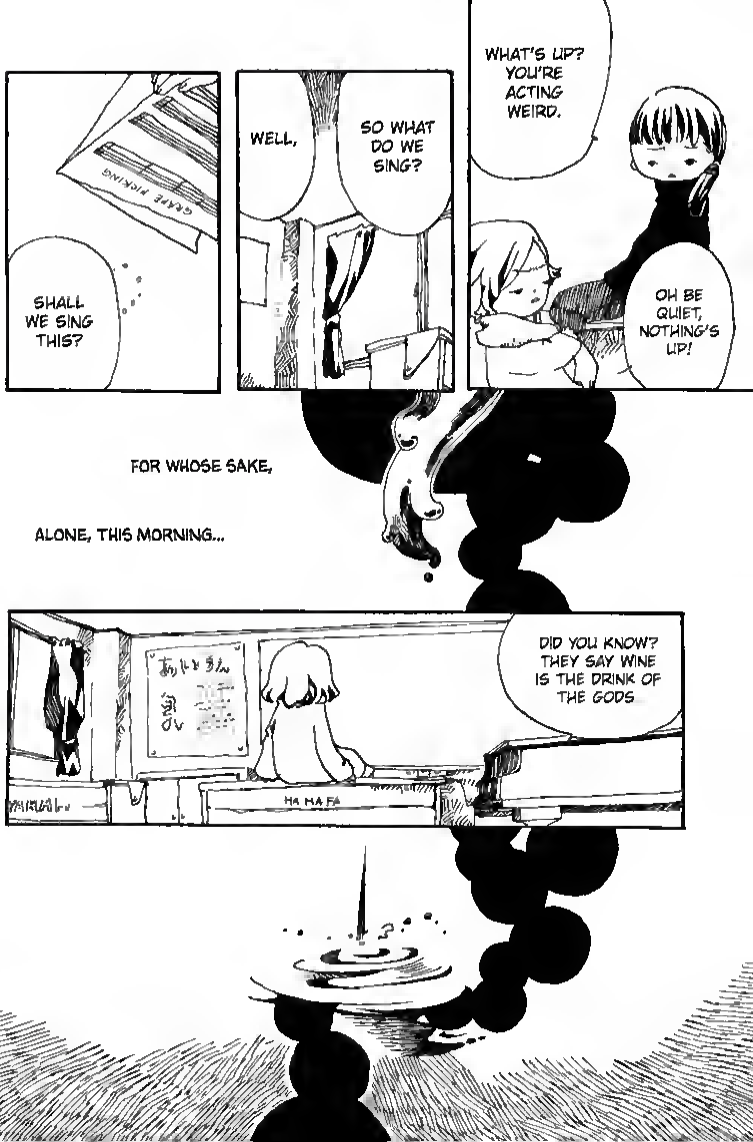
Grape Picking


NAKAJIMA-SENSEI...
YOU WERE LISTENING?
I COULD HEAR IT FROM THE HALLWAY.

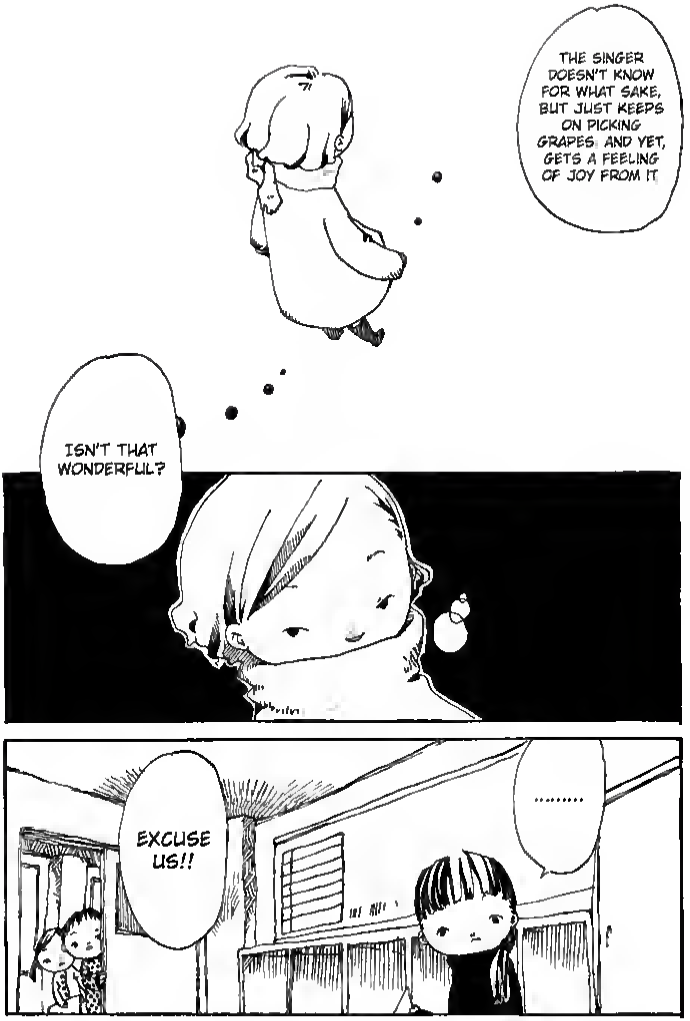

HMM? YOU'RE NOT EVEN A STUDENT,
WHY ARE YOU PRACTICING FOR THE CHOIR CONCERT?

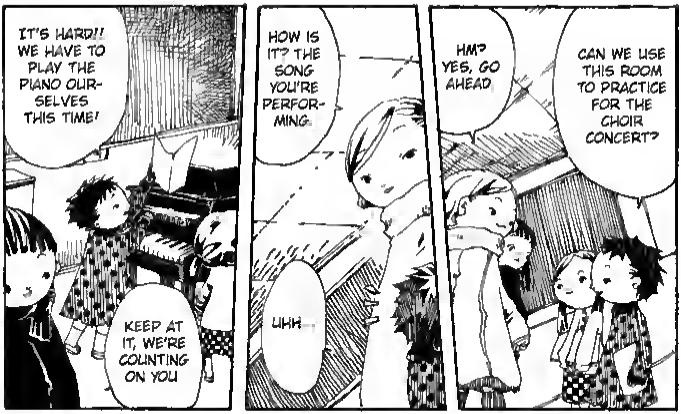

I LOVE THIS SONG "GRAPE PICKING". IT HAS SUCH A SENTIMENTAL FEELING...
WOW, YOU REALLY KNOW YOUR STUFF!
THE COMPOSER IS NIIMI TOKUHIDE, RIGHT?
I'm gonna close the window


HEY, DO YOU WANT TO SING SOMETHING?

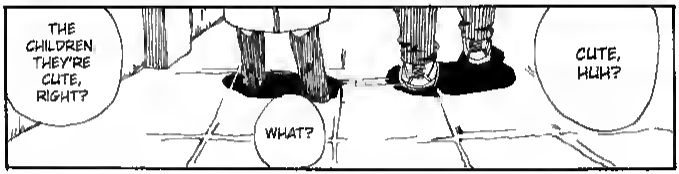

WHAT'S UP? YOU'RE ACTING WEIRD.
OH BE QUIET, NOTHING'S UP!
WELL,
SO WHAT DO WE SING?
SHALL WE SING THIS?
GRADE MARKING
FOR WHOSE SAKE,
ALONE, THIS MORNING...
DID YOU KNOW? THEY SAY WINE IS THE DRINK OF THE GODS
HA HA FA

HMM, REALLY?
Ah
That's off-key
HEY, WHAT SONGS DID YOU LIKE WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE?
ME? UHHHM
I LIKED SONGS LIKE THE GATCHA-MAN THEME SONG.
Hm?
OH! THE GATCHAMAN THEME SONG!
ALL RIGHT THEN. WHAT KIND OF SONGS DO YOU LIKE NAKAJIMA-SENSEI?
HM? I LIKE THIS SONG, "GRAPE PICKING."
AH!! YOU'RE MAKING FUN OF ME!
PAH!


THE SINGER DOESN'T KNOW FOR WHAT SAKE, BUT JUST KEEPS ON PICKING GRAPES. AND YET, GETS A FEELING OF JOY FROM IT.
ISN'T THAT WONDERFUL?
EXCUSE US!!
.....

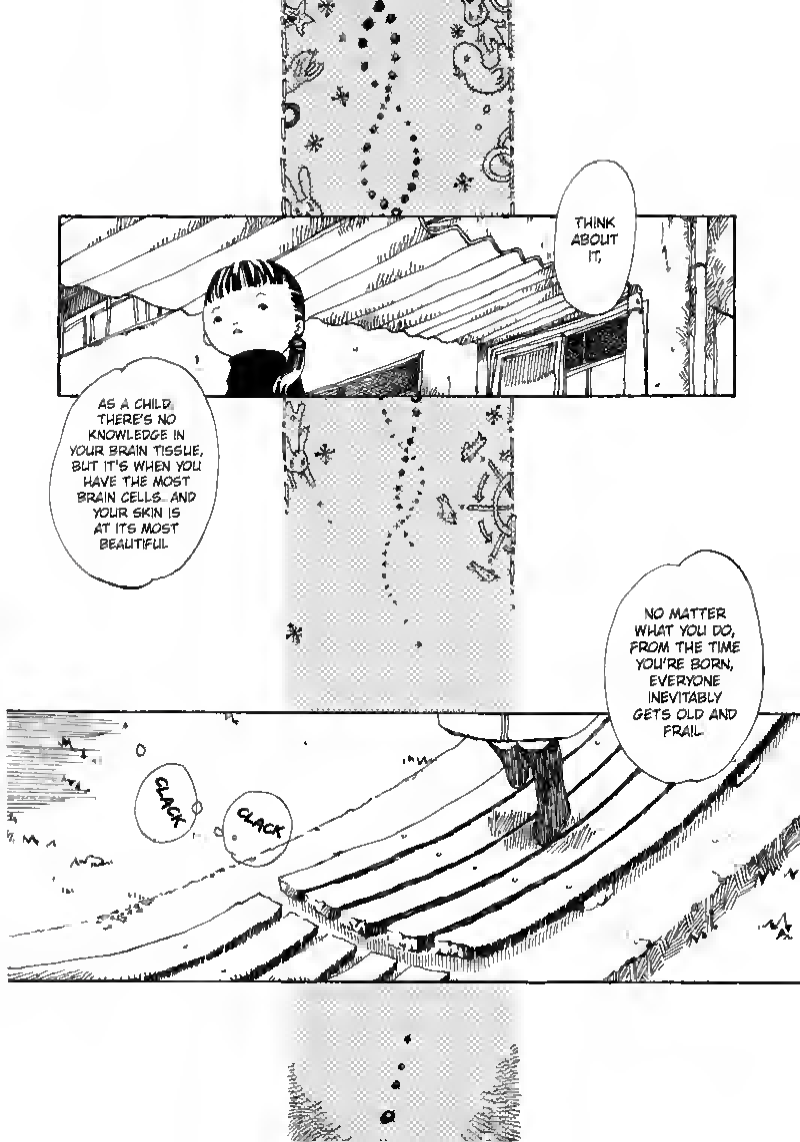

IT'S HARD!! WE HAVE TO PLAY THE PIANO OURSELVES THIS TIME!
KEEP AT IT, WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU
HOW IS IT? THE SONG YOU'RE PERFORMING.
UHH...
HM? YES, GO AHEAD.
CAN WE USE THIS ROOM TO PRACTICE FOR THE CHOIR CONCERT?

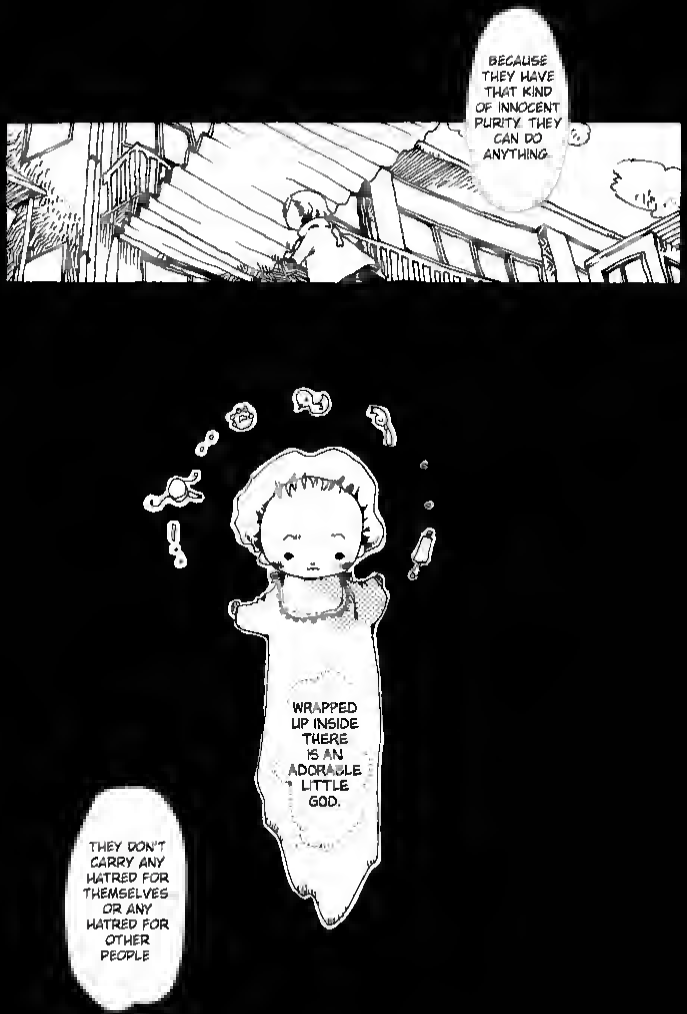
dum
dum
dum

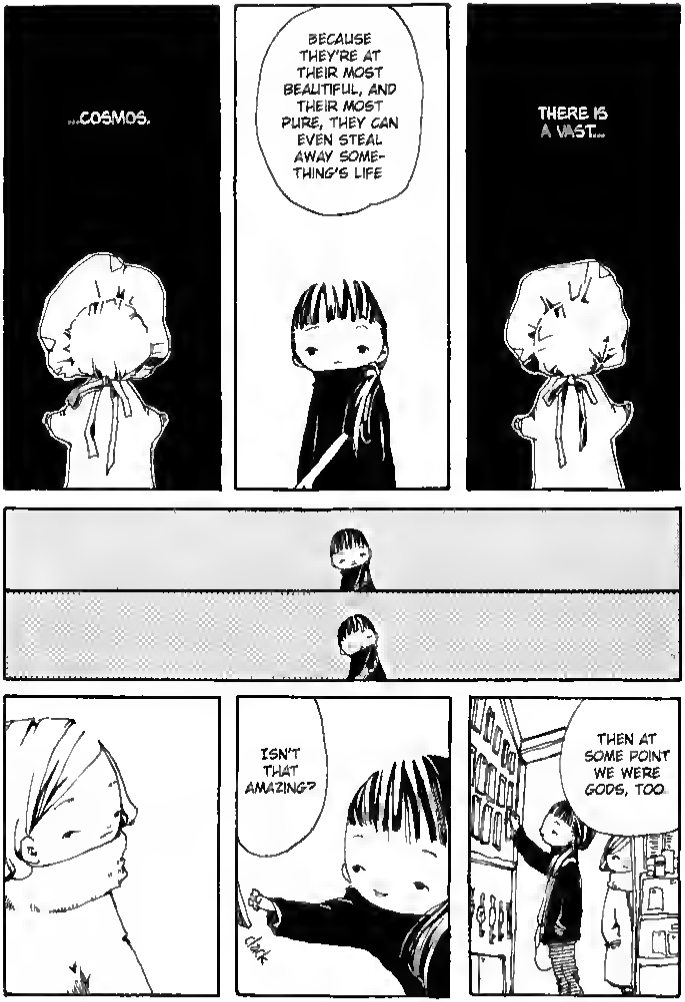

THE CHILDREN. THEY'RE CUTE, RIGHT?
WHAT?
CUTE, HUH?

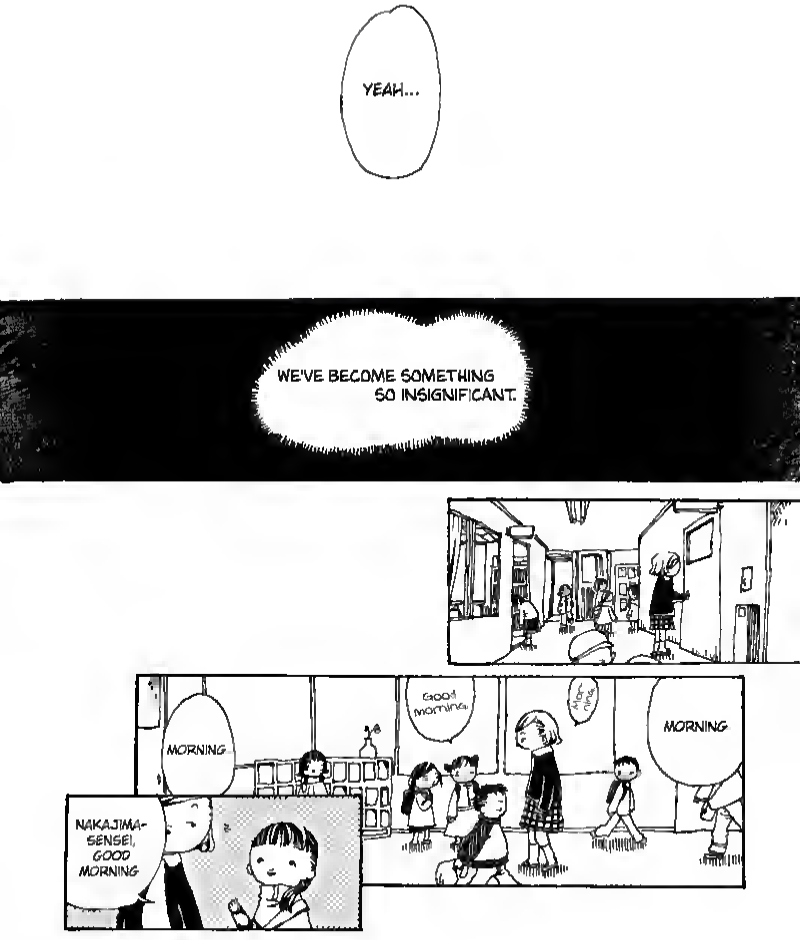
CHILDREN ARE LIKE ANGELS.
ALL TINY AND ROUND
OH? IF IT'S CHILDREN WE'RE TALKING ABOUT
THEY'RE NOT ANGELS
THEY'RE CLOSER TO GODS

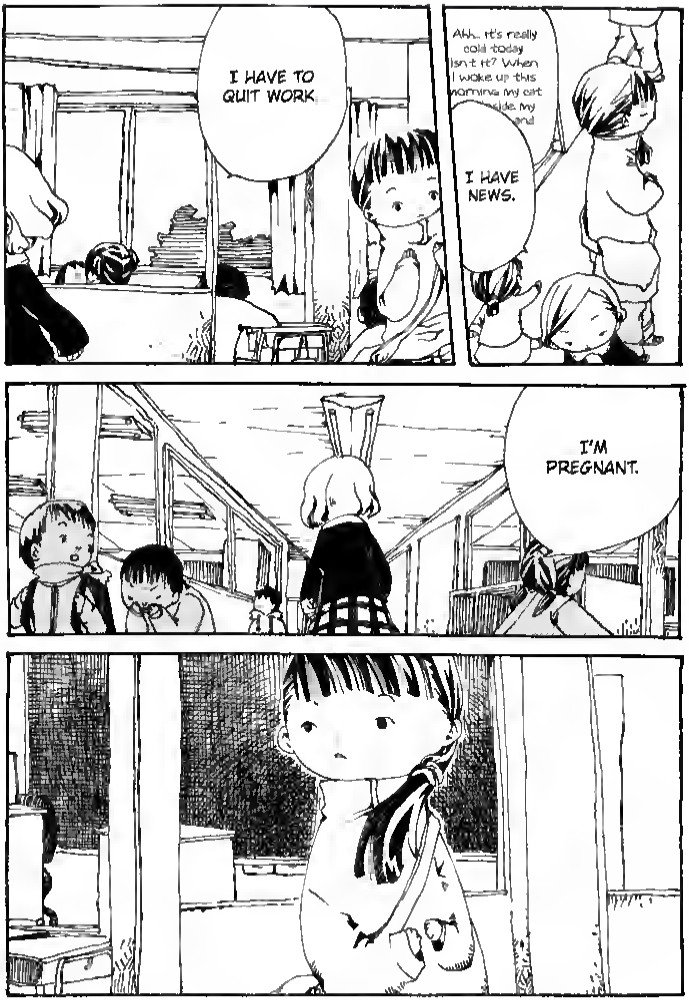
GOOD-BYE, SENSEI!!
OH, GOOD-BYE.
IF YOU'RE STOPPING BY YOUR GRANDMOTHER'S, BE SURE TO SHOW HER SOME OF THAT CHEER!
OKAY!
SO, LIKE I WAS SAYING...
I THINK CHILDREN ARE LIKE GODS.
GODS?
THAT'S RIGHT
..


THINK ABOUT IT.
AS A CHILD, THERE'S NO KNOWLEDGE IN YOUR BRAIN TISSUE, BUT IT'S WHEN YOU HAVE THE MOST BRAIN CELLS. AND YOUR SKIN IS AT ITS MOST BEAUTIFUL
NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO, FROM THE TIME YOU'RE BORN, EVERYONE INEVITABLY GETS OLD AND FRAIL.
CLACK
CLACK


BECAUSE THEY HAVE THAT KIND OF INNOCENT PURITY. THEY CAN DO ANYTHING.
WRAPPED UP INSIDE THERE IS AN ADORABLE LITTLE GOD.
THEY DON'T CARRY ANY HATRED FOR THEMSELVES OR ANY HATRED FOR OTHER PEOPLE


...COSMOS.
BECAUSE THEY'RE AT THEIR MOST BEAUTIFUL, AND THEIR MOST PURE, THEY CAN EVEN STEAL AWAY SOMETHING'S LIFE
THERE IS A VAST...
ISN'T THAT AMAZING?
clank
THEN AT SOME POINT WE WERE GODS, TOO.


YEAH...
WE'VE BECOME SOMETHING SO INSIGNIFICANT.
MORNING
Good morning.
Hey, it's...
MORNING
NAKAJIMA-SENSEI, GOOD MORNING


I HAVE TO QUIT WORK.
Ahh... it's really cold today isn't it? When I woke up this morning my cat cuddle my and
I HAVE NEWS.
I'M PREGNANT.

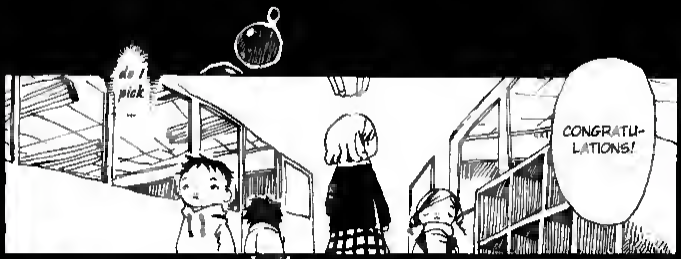
For whose sake do I sharpen the shears~

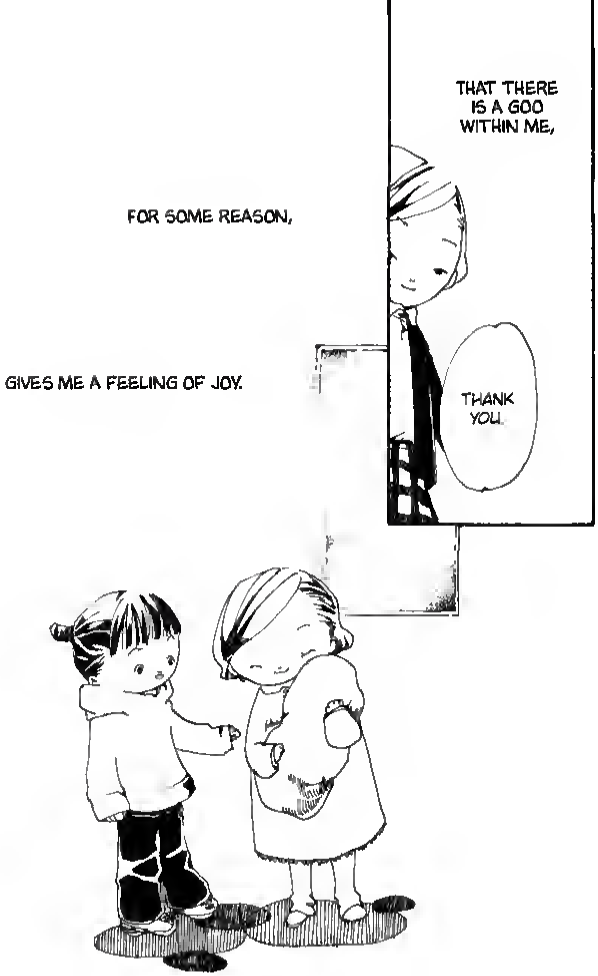
For whose sake, this green path~

For whose sake, alone, this morning~

do I pick~

blue grapes...



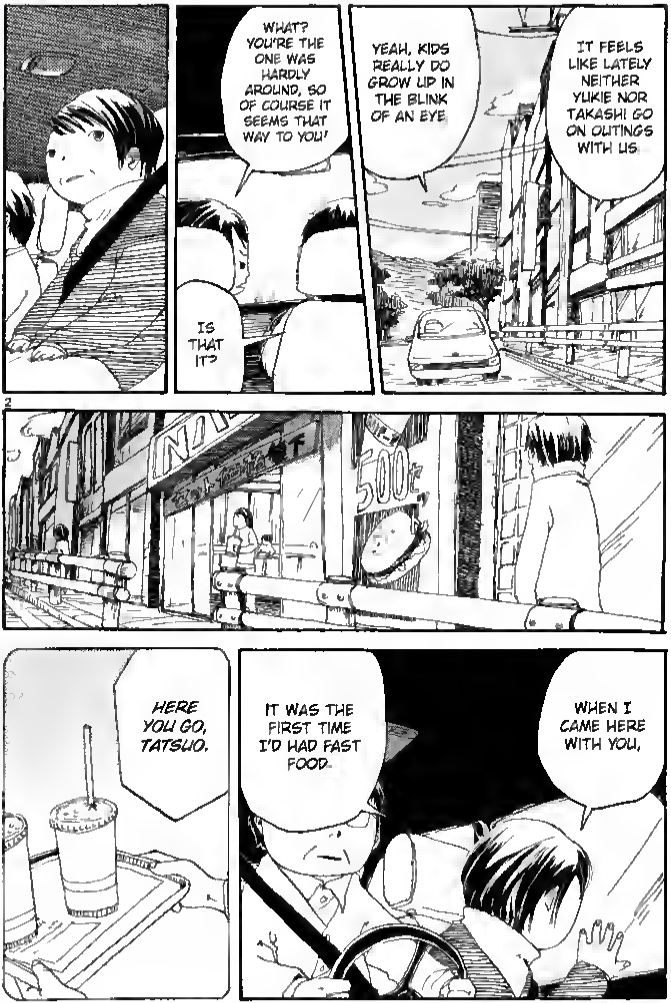

THAT THERE IS A GOO WITHIN ME,
FOR SOME REASON,
GIVES ME A FEELING OF JOY.
THANK YOU.

• END •

Kumo

Translation,
Scans & Editing

IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE WE'VE COME BACK TO THE COUNTRYSIDE
YEAH...
let's go home.
I WONDER HOW MANY YEARS NOW...

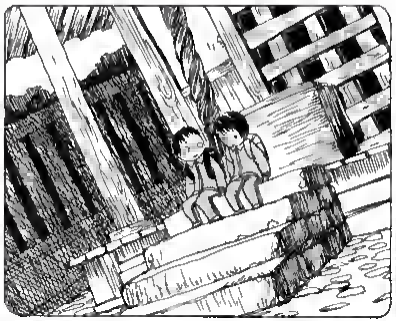

IT FEELS LIKE LATELY NEITHER YUKIE NOR TAKASHI GO ON OUTINGS WITH US.
YEAH, KIDS REALLY DO GROW UP IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE.
WHAT? YOU'RE THE ONE WAS HARDLY AROUND, SO OF COURSE IT SEEMS THAT WAY TO YOU!
IS THAT IT?
2
500
WHEN I CAME HERE WITH YOU,
IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'D HAD FAST FOOD.
HERE YOU GO, TATSUO.

SLURK
WHAT'S THIS, TOSHIKO?
A "SHAKE", I'VE BEEN WANTING TO TRY ONE.
Nothing's coming out.
SURRRR

KATHNK
AMAZING, EVEN THE TRAIN IS PACKED.
KATHNK
KATHNK
WHOA!
KATHNK
BUZZ
TOSHI-KOOO!
WOLVE
BUZZ
PALE
TOSHI-KO..?
DIDDY
OOH, LOOK, IT'S TOKYO TOWER!
I'm not listening!
I NEVER WOULD'VE GUESSED YOU'D GET DIZZY AND PASS OUT.
JUST BECAUSE THE SCENERY OUTSIDE WAS TOO CLOSE.

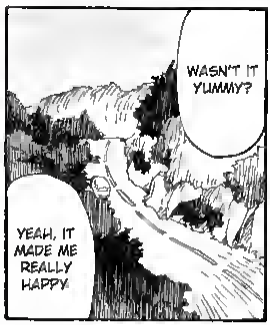
TIME'S REALLY GONE BY.
I GUESS...
HOW MANY YEARS HAS IT BEEN SINCE WE MET?
UHH,
IT'S BEEN AT LEAST 40 YEARS, I THINK...
HAS IT REALLY?
IT HAS
SINCE WE MET IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
YOU HAD SNOT DRIPPING FROM YOUR NOSE
I think that was the first time we met.
WHAT? NO WAY.

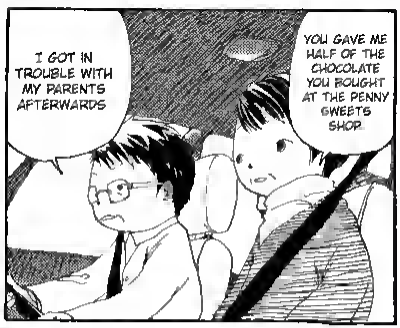
YOU LOST YOUR ERASER?
IT WAS SPECIAL TO YOU, RIGHT?
I'LL HELP YOU LOOK FOR IT,
IT'LL BE OKAY
THAT'S A LOT OF SNOT...
Snort...
WHAT'S WRONG?
IN THE END,
WE NEVER FOUND THAT PINK ERASER
DO YOU REMEMBER THAT SHRINE?
VROOM
I EVEN GAVE YOU A SCENTED ERASER I REALLY LIKED TO REPLACE IT!
Kids really love scented things, huh...
IT DID!
DID THAT REALLY HAPPEN?

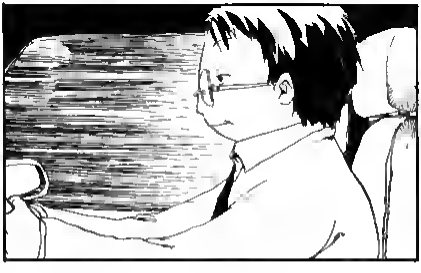


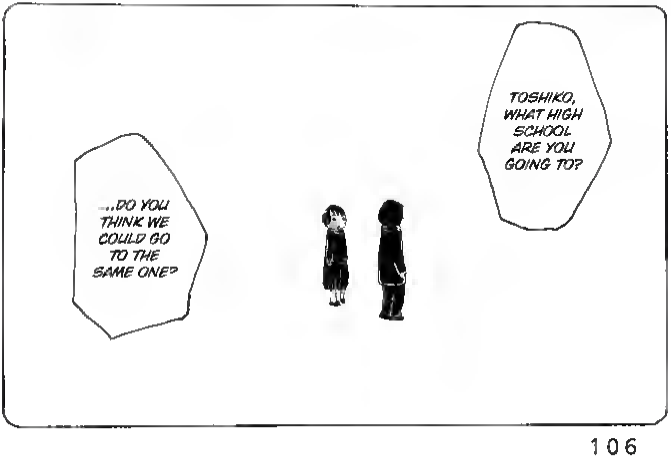
IT WAS VERY QUIET, AND A LITTLE SCARY.
THAT'S RIGHT, HARDLY ANYONE EVER CAME THERE

crack


WASN'T IT YUMMY?
YEAH, IT MADE ME REALLY HAPPY.


I GOT IN TROUBLE WITH MY PARENTS AFTERWARDS
YOU GAVE ME HALF OF THE CHOCOLATE YOU BOUGHT AT THE PENNY SWEETS SHOP.




TOSHIKO, WHAT HIGH SCHOOL ARE YOU GOING TO?
...DO YOU THINK WE COULD GO TO THE SAME ONE?

TOSHI-KOOO?
TATSUO'S HERE TO SEE YOU!
HMM? MAYBE SHE'S SLEEPING
Please come in.
SQUEAK
SQUEAK
SHE REALLY IS ASLEEP
!!
I JUST REMEMBERED
WHAT?
YOUR PROPOSAL
PLEASE FORGET IT

WOW.
IT'S INCRED-IBLE.
WOULD YOU...
MARRY ME?
TOSHIKO..
YES?
YES..
nod

TATSUO?
I'M...
!?
?
SHAKE
SHAKE SHAKE
IDIOT ...
I'M AFRAID OF HEIGHTS
scary
BUT,
I WANTED TO PROPOSE AT THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE IN THE VILLAGE...

Shriiiek!!
OH?
THAT WAS SO TOUCHING
NOW THAT I LOOK BACK ON IT I DIDN'T NEED TO WORK SO HARD...
HERE WE ARE
SCREECH
JUST A BIT OF A WALK AFTER THIS
YOU MAY BE RIGHT...
SO IT WOULD'VE BEEN OVER-RUN WITH SHRUBS IN NO TIME.
BUT EVEN IF WE'D TRIED, IT'S ALL MOUNTAIN TRAILS OUT HERE.
I KNOW
I'D WANTED TO TRY LIVING HERE JUST ONE MORE TIME...

THE PLACE I WAS BORN AND RAISED WAS A SMALL VILLAGE.
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
RUSTLE
NOW,

THE LAND FROM MY MEMORIES IS COMPLETELY SUBMERGED UNDERWATER,

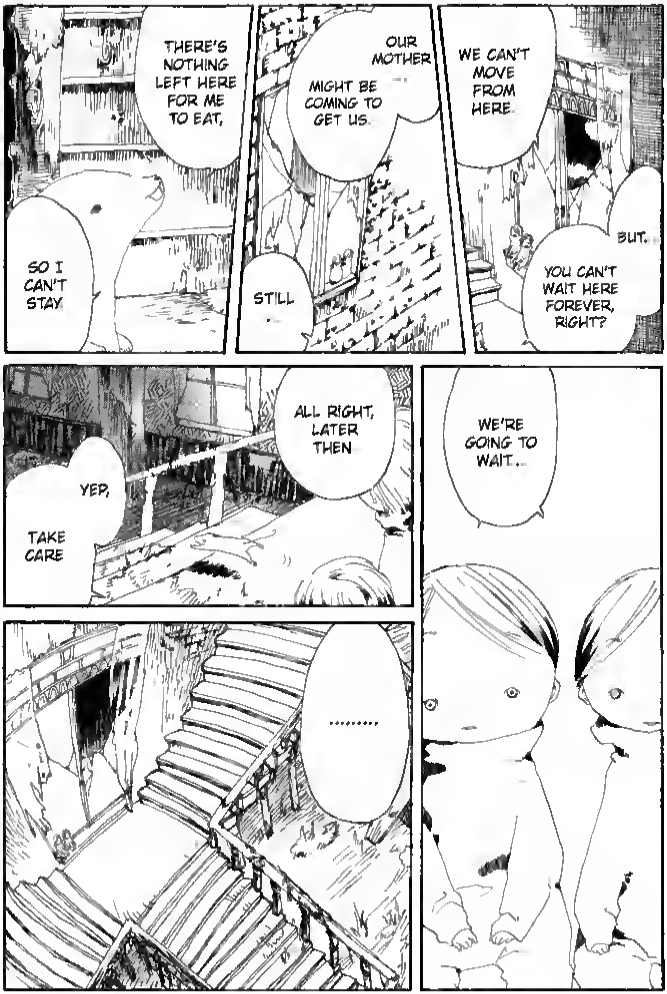
AND EVEN THOUGH I KNOW IT'S DOWN THERE, I CAN NEVER SEE IT AGAIN.

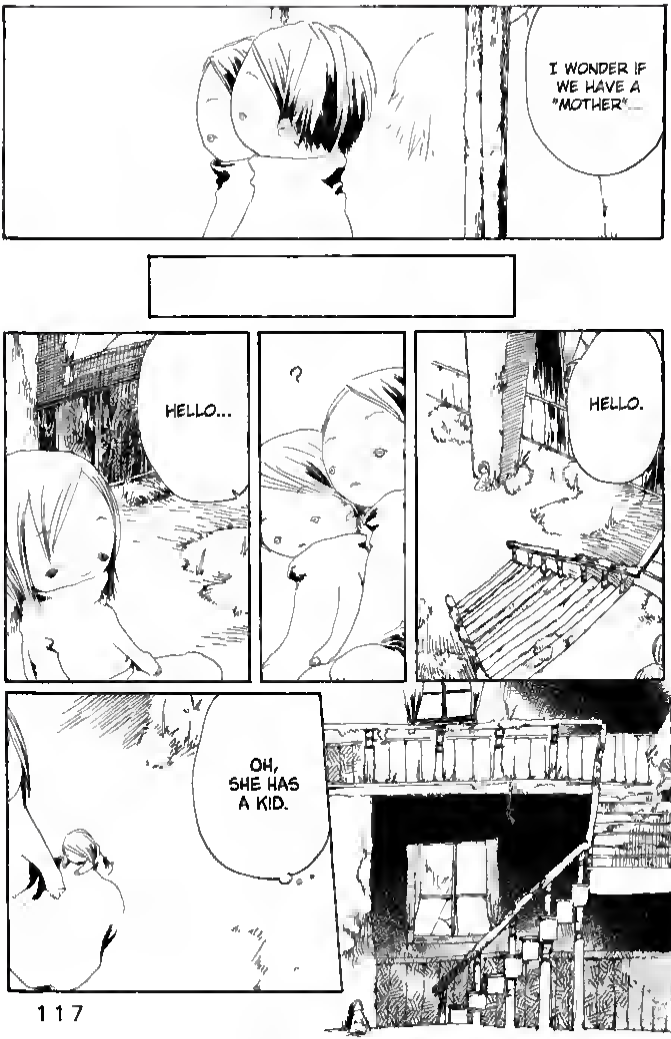
IT'S ALMOST LIKE AN ENORMOUS COFFIN.
HONEY.
PLEASE
STAY WITH ME FOREVER.
YEAH?
SURE.

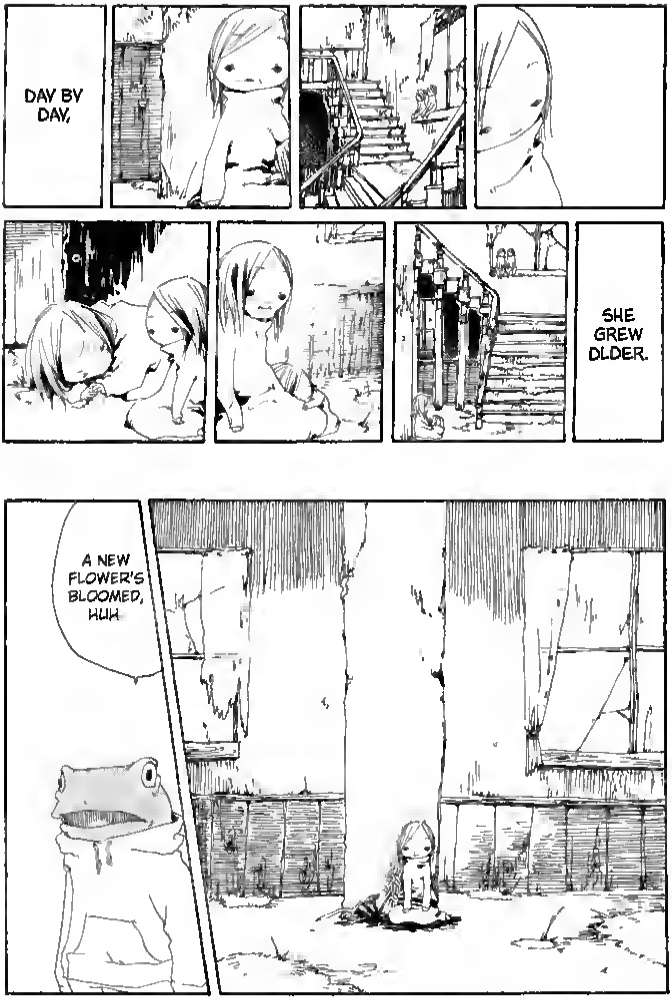
Kumo

Translation,
Scans & Editing

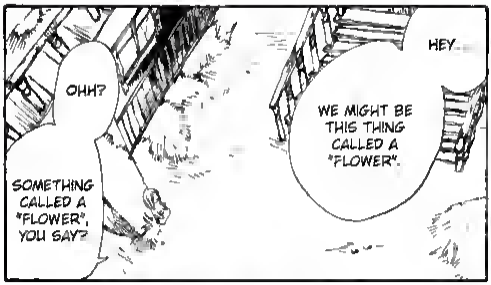
The Story of a Flower
YOU'RE STILL HERE?


THERE'S NOTHING LEFT HERE FOR ME TO EAT,
SO I CAN'T STAY
OUR MOTHER MIGHT BE COMING TO GET US.
STILL...
WE CAN'T MOVE FROM HERE.
BUT, YOU CAN'T WAIT HERE FOREVER, RIGHT?
ALL RIGHT, LATER THEN
YEP, TAKE CARE
WE'RE GOING TO WAIT...
.....

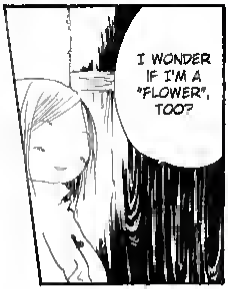

I WONDER IF WE HAVE A "MOTHER"...
HELLO...
?
HELLO.
OH, SHE HAS A KID.

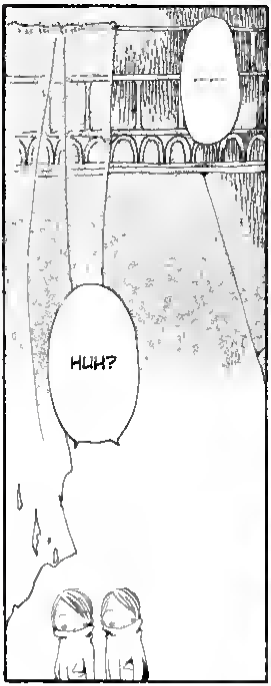

DAY BY DAY,
SHE GREW OLDER.
A NEW FLOWER'S BLOOMED, HUH.

HEY, YOU...
hop
OH, IT REALLY IS A FLOWER.
SHE LOOKS LIKE US
hop
A FLOWER?
YEAH, A FLOWER.
HMM? WHAT?
THE PERSON WITH YOU WHO GOT ALL WRINKLY. WHERE DID SHE GO?
ow!
WHERE DID THE PERSON WHO WAS WITH YOU GO?
chomp
I DON'T KNOW, I DON'T REMEMBER WHEN I CAME TO, I WAS JUST HERE.
IT'S ALWAYS BEEN JUST ME

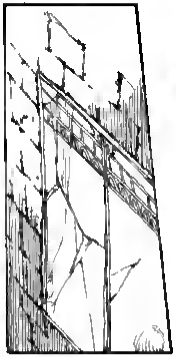

HEY.
WE MIGHT BE THIS THING CALLED A "FLOWER".
OHH?
SOMETHING CALLED A "FLOWER", YOU SAY?

GUESS SHE DOESN'T REMEMBER.
YEAH.


I WONDER IF I'M A "FLOWER", TOO?

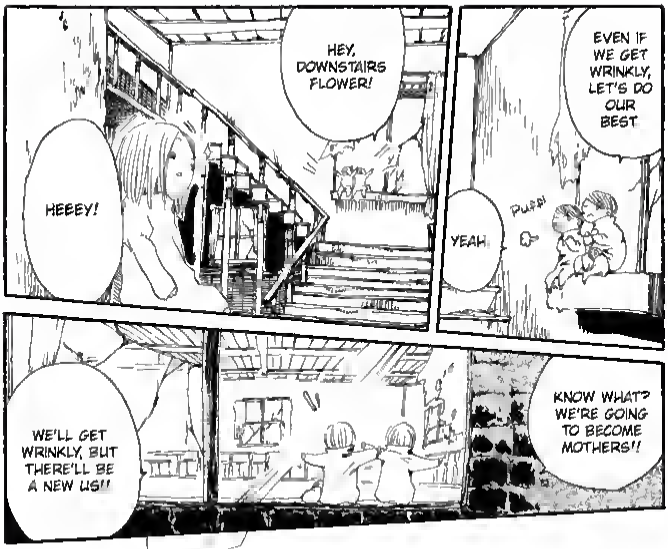

HUH?

YOU BOYS ARE REALLY TINY AND ADORABLE.



I ENJOY THE TIME I SPEND LOOKING AT YOU.

IT LOOKS LIKE YOU, TOO
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU
COULD THIS BE...
HEY, THERE'S A BABY
YEAH
A NEW US?
?
WE DON'T HAVE A MOTHER, HUH
NO, BUT...
THE WOMAN DOWNSTAIRS BECAME A NEW HER I'M SURE OF IT...
RIGHT!
NOW WE'LL BECOME MOTHERS


HEEEY!
HEY, DOWNSTAIRS FLOWER!
YEAH.
PUFF!
EVEN IF WE GET WRINKLY, LET'S DO OUR BEST
WE'LL GET WRINKLY, BUT THERE'LL BE A NEW US!!
KNOW WHAT? WE'RE GOING TO BECOME MOTHERS!!

THE END

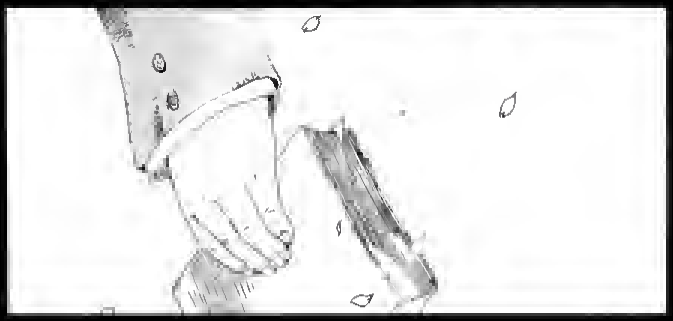
Kumo

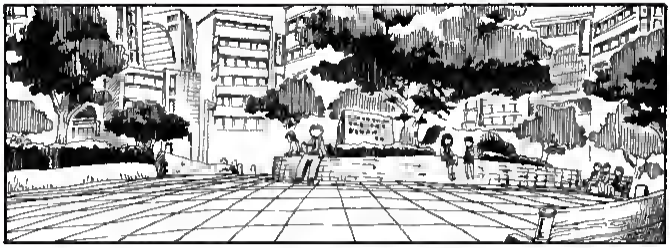
Translation,
Scans & Editing

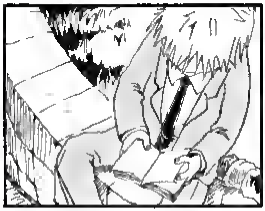
The Road Where Flowers Bloom

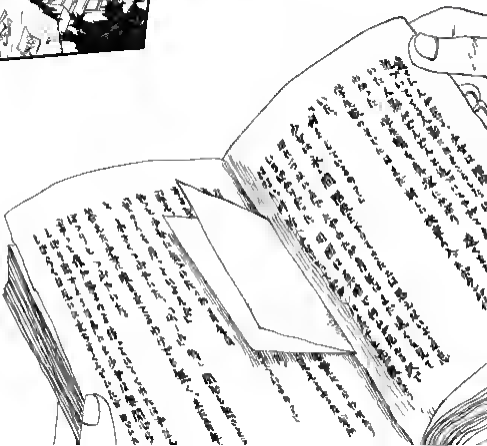
IT SEEMS LIKE IT ALL STARTED...

WITH SOME CHERRY BLOSSOMS THAT GOT STUCK IN MY BOOK, AND CARRIED HOME WITH ME.

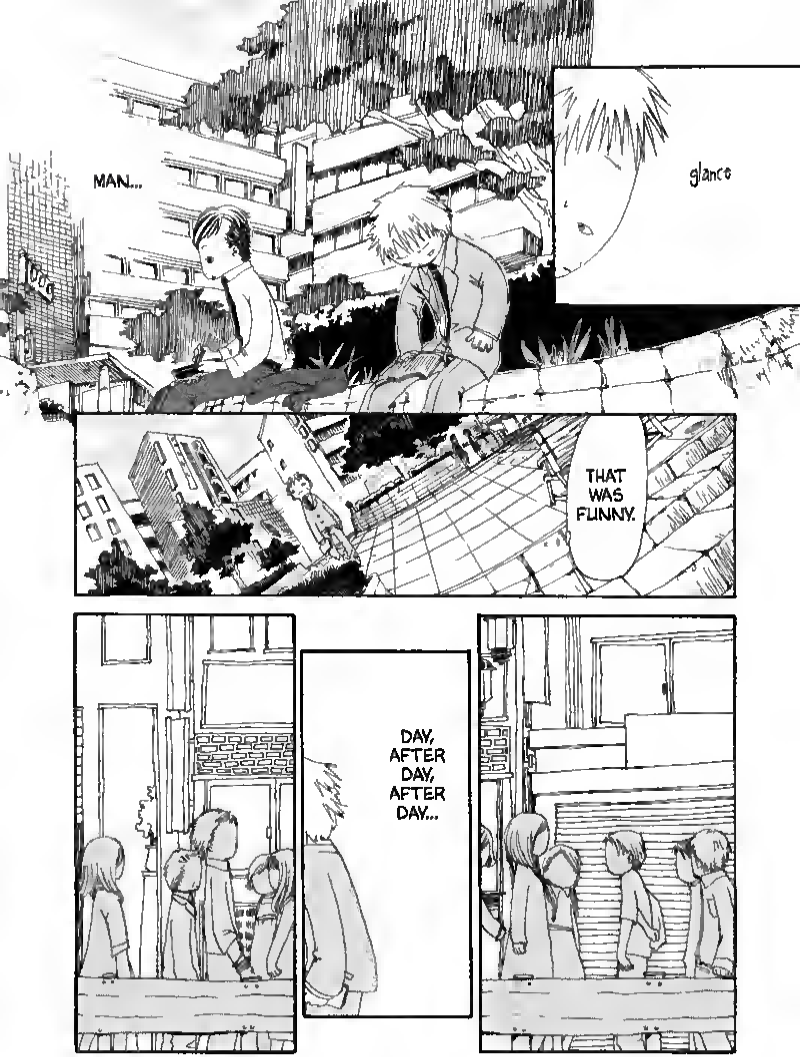




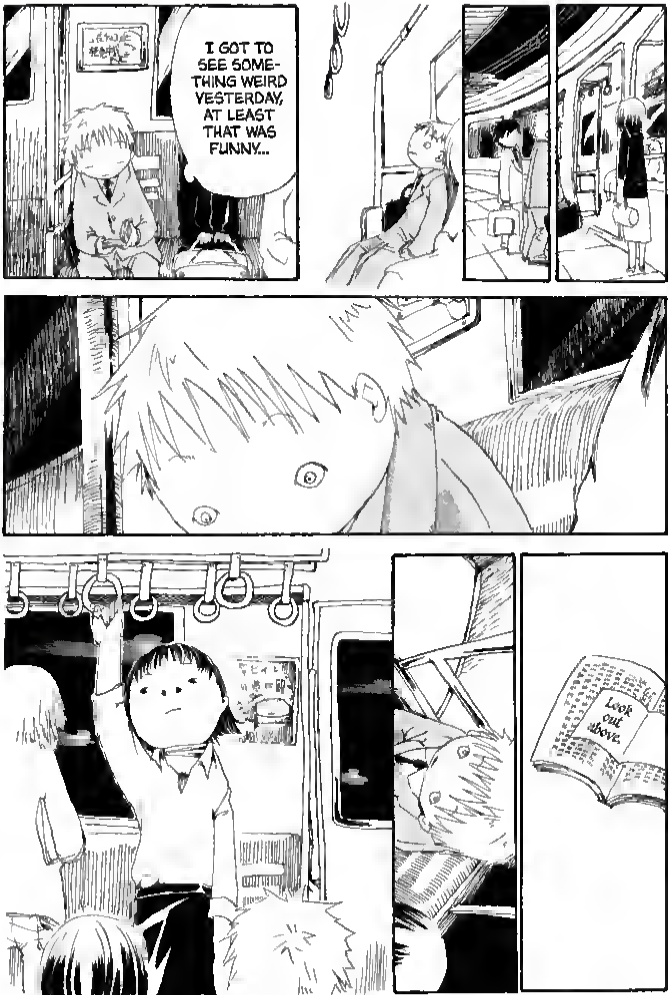




Look out on your right.
waver
IT'S PROBABLY A HAIR-PIECE.
That's pretty sad...


MAN...
glance
THAT WAS FUNNY.
DAY, AFTER DAY, AFTER DAY...

NOTHING INTERESTING EVER HAPPENS.
ANYTHING WOULD BE GOOD
One message
BEEP
It's your mom! Come home once in a while!
GOOD WORK
Good work.
YOSHIZAWA
YOUR LUNCH BREAK WAS TOO LONG
Also,
your old classmate Fujishima-kun...
I still have five minutes.
OH, SORRY
I CAN'T GO HOME.
...is being hospitalized. So please come visit him.
I HAVEN'T GOTTEN MARRIED, NOR A RAISE,
NOR A PROMOTION.
I'm a loser at life...


I GOT TO SEE SOMETHING WEIRD YESTERDAY, AT LEAST THAT WAS FUNNY...
Look out above.

HER NOSE HAIR IS...
INCRED-IBLE...
WITHOUT FAIL, EVERY DAY...
Look out behind you.
Again
BWAGHOO!
Eeek!
SWISH
INTER-ESTING THINGS WERE HAPPENING ...
Let's get him out of here

BUT, I GOT BORED WITH IT PRETTY FAST.
HUH.
SOMEHOW IT'S NOT THAT INTERESTING.
Are you all right?
Oh yeah.
IT'S NOT ENOUGH.
I guess?
A car is coming!
EVEN THOUGH THINGS KEEP ESCALATING.
I WANNA SEE...
SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE REAL.
Look out in the street at night.
WHEN THE REASON FOR ALL THESE HUGE ACCIDENTS,
MIGHT JUST BE BECAUSE OF THIS BOOK.
.....
WHAT AM I THINKING
I'm awful aren't I
I'M SORRY.
DUMP

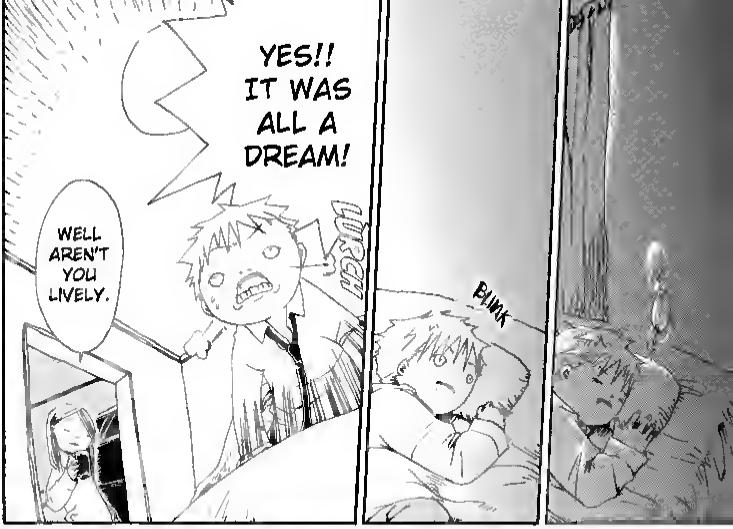
HUH?
WHA?
HEY...
KOFF
KOFF
?
HUH?
HUH?
HUH?
WHOA!
WHAT?
WHAT'S GOING ON!?
CLANK CLANK

DRAG DRAG
WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON...?

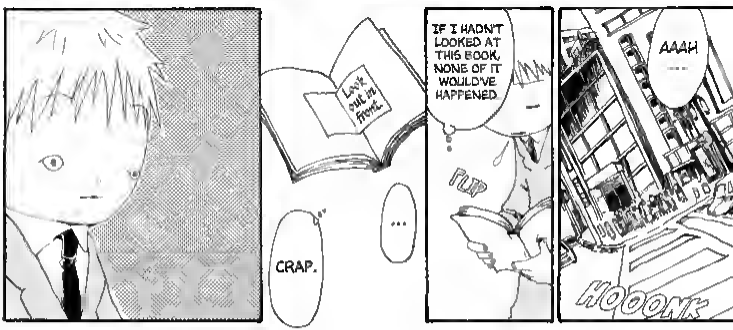
WHAT'S ...
...HAPPEN-ING?
HER THROAT'S CUT AND SHE'S NOT BREATH-ING
SHE'S DYING.
DRIP
YEAH, YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT
IT'S JUST AS YOU WISHED.
HEY.
YES !?
CAN YOU LEND ME SOME CLOTHES?
YOU WANTED SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE REAL, RIGHT?
Y... YEAH
YOU WEREN'T SATISFIED, RIGHT?
EH?
EVEN A CAR ACCIDENT WASN'T ENOUGH
EH?
Blink
HM?

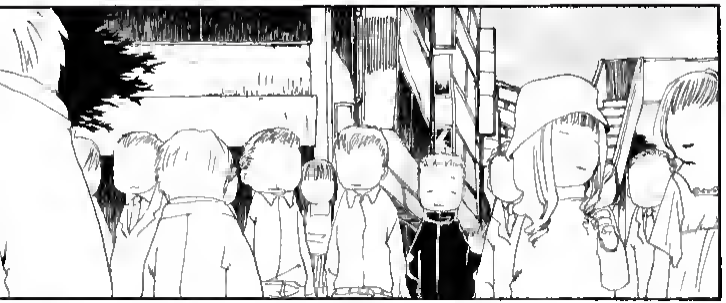
Whew...
THAT FEELS BETTER.
YOU'RE NOT DEAD!!
I'M ASKING IF YOU FEEL BETTER AFTER KILLING ME.
.....
GLAD TO HEAR IT.
AND YOU?
HUH?
DO YOU FEEL BETTER?
YOU
...ARE A VERY BORING PERSON.
PAT
OHH, THAT'S TRUE.
YOU THINK ABOUT NOTHING BUT HOW BORING EVERY DAY IS.
YOU'RE BAD-MOUTHED BY YOUR SUPERIORS AT WORK, AND HAVE NO DRIVE TO GET PROMOTED.
THE COMMONPLACE LEFT YOU BORED EVERY DAY
SO,
YOU KILLED ME.

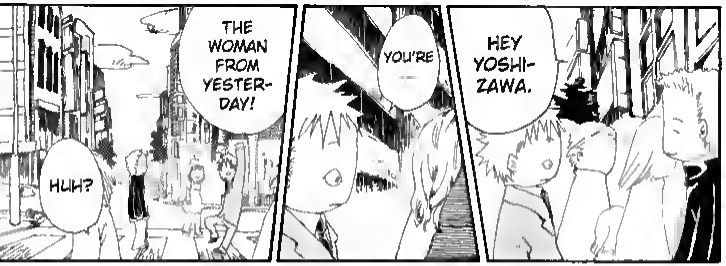
I WONDER.
OR MAYBE I SHOULD'VE KILLED YOU INSTEAD?
Huff
What a pain
WHAT THE HELL'S WITH YOU!?
DID THAT SATISFY YOU?
KILL-ING.
Stick
!!
HOW DOES IT FEEL TO HAVE GOTTEN WHAT YOU WERE WISHING FOR? YOU
SICKO.
BUT THAT WASN'T ENOUGH TO SATISFY YOU AFTER ALL, WAS IT?
La~ze
EEEK!
AREN'T I THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE ASKING YOU THAT?
GUH!
SHE'S RIGHT, BUT...
PLEASE, DO SOMETHING, TAKE ME BACK TO REALITY.
SO YOU...
DID I REALLY WANT TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS?
GAAAAH...


YES!! IT WAS ALL A DREAM!
WELL AREN'T YOU LIVELY.
DUSH
BUMP

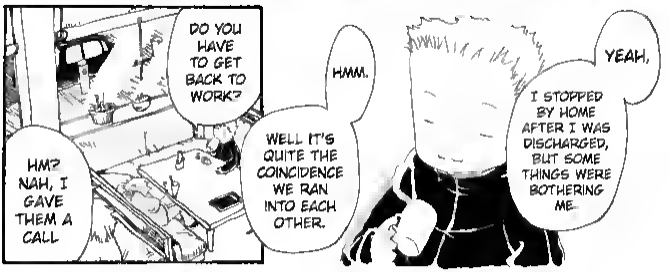
DAMMIT, WHAT THE HELL?


Look out in front.
CRAP.
...
IF I HADN'T LOOKED AT THIS BOOK, NONE OF IT WOULD'VE HAPPENED.
FLIP
AAAH
HOOONK

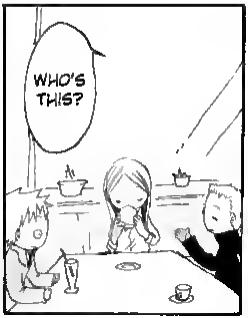



THE WOMAN FROM YESTERDAY!
HUH?
YOU'RE
HEY YOSHIZAWA.

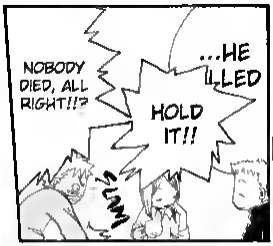
I HEARD YOU FELL ILL AND HAD TO BE HOSPITALIZED...
HM?


DO YOU HAVE TO GET BACK TO WORK?
HM? NAH, I GAVE THEM A CALL
HMM.
WELL IT'S QUITE THE COINCIDENCE WE RAN INTO EACH OTHER.
YEAH,
I STOPPED BY HOME AFTER I WAS DISCHARGED, BUT SOME THINGS WERE BOTHERING ME.

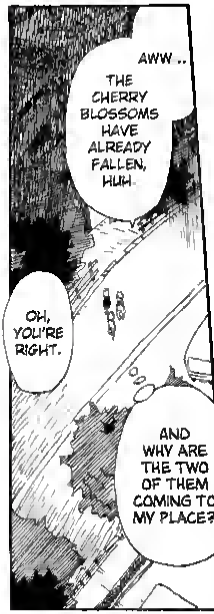
NAME'S SATSUKI, NICE TO MEET YA
WHEN DID SHE SHOW UP?


WHO'S THIS?

BY THE WAY, YOSHI-ZAWA...


NOBODY DIED, ALL RIGHT!?
...HE LLED
HOLD IT!!
WHY?

YOU KNOW,

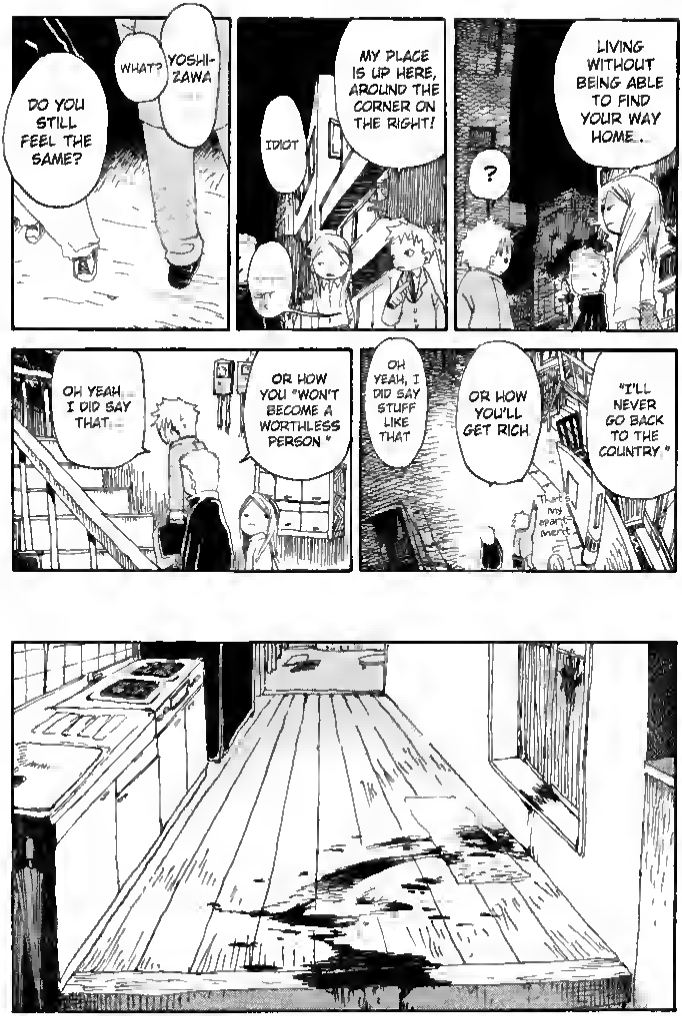

AWW.. THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS HAVE ALREADY FALLEN, HUH.
OH, YOU'RE RIGHT.
AND WHY ARE THE TWO OF THEM COMING TO MY PLACE?

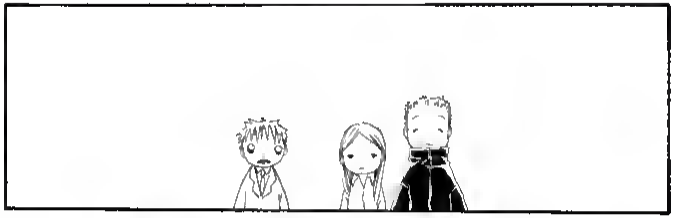
.....

HE LLED US.
Stop iiit!!
YOU TWO REALLY GET ALONG.

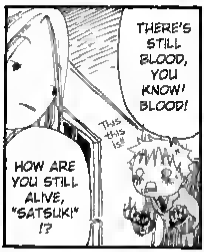
YOSHI-ZAWA'S SO CHILDISH
ALWAYS GOING ON ABOUT HOW HE WANTS SOMETHING AMUSING TO HAPPEN
WHY, JUST YESTERDAY

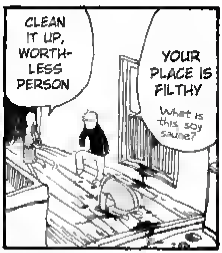
CHERRY BLOS-SOMS...
YOU KNOW SATSUKI-SAN, UP UNTIL OUR LAST YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL, WE WERE RAISED WAY OUT IN THE COUNTRY
EVERY DAY WE'D WALK HOME, CHATTING, DOWN A CHERRY BLOSSOM TREE-LINED ROAD...
DO YOU REMEMBER THAT STORY YOSHIZAWA? ABOUT THE GOD OF THE RICE FIELDS?
HM?
OH YEAH, THERE WAS SOME STORY LIKE THAT!
That the cherry blossoms were a sign of the god
EVERYONE HAS SOME PLACE THEY WANT TO GO BACK HOME TO

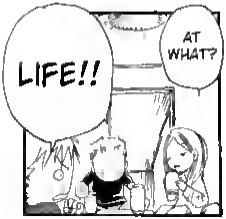

YOSHI-ZAWA
WHAT?
DO YOU STILL FEEL THE SAME?
MY PLACE IS UP HERE, AROUND THE CORNER ON THE RIGHT!
IDIOT
LIVING WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO FIND YOUR WAY HOME...
?
"I'LL NEVER GO BACK TO THE COUNTRY."
OR HOW YOU'LL GET RICH
OH YEAH, I DID SAY STUFF LIKE THAT
There's my apartment
OR HOW YOU "WON'T BECOME A WORTHLESS PERSON."
OH YEAH, I DID SAY THAT...



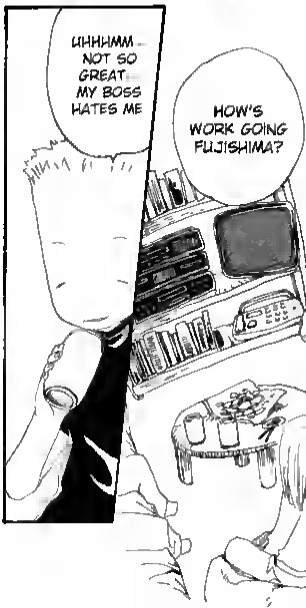
HE'S A WEIRDO.
WHAT A FUNNY CONVER-SATION.
Ahaha!
SAVE ME!
Huh?

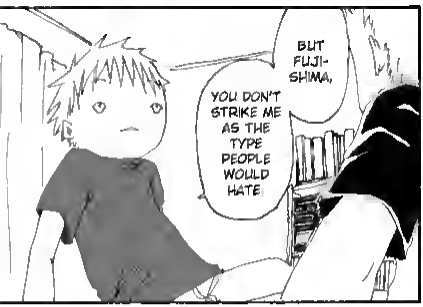

THERE'S STILL BLOOD, YOU KNOW! BLOOD!
This this is!
HOW ARE YOU STILL ALIVE, "SATSUKI" !?


CLEAN IT UP, WORTH-LESS PERSON
YOUR PLACE IS FILTHY
What is this soy sauce?


LIFE!!
AT WHAT?

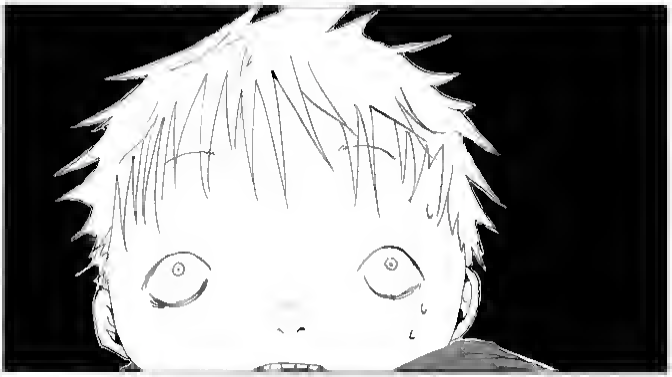
I GUESS I REALLY AM A LOSER...

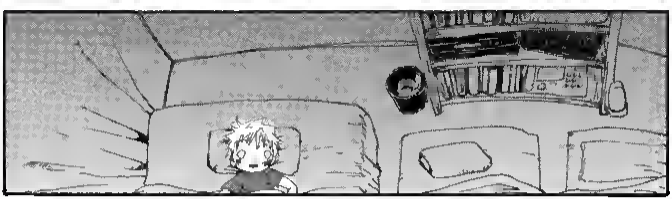

UHHHMM... NOT SO GREAT... MY BOSS HATES ME
HOW'S WORK GOING FUJISHIMA?


BUT FUJI-SHIMA,
YOU DON'T STRIKE ME AS THE TYPE PEOPLE WOULD HATE

JUST QUIT.
THAT SORT OF STUFF
ENOUGH ALREADY.
YOU JUST GRIN LIKE AN IDIOT, AND CAN'T EVEN DO YOUR JOB.
WEEELL
THINGS I SAID I WANTED TO DO?
WHAT? YOU DON'T REMEMBER?
BEFORE YOU CAME HERE, THERE WERE SO MANY THINGS YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO DO
HOW ABOUT YOU, YOSHIZAWA?
UNLIKE ME YOU'RE SO PERSONABLE...
I CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE IT,
NOT YET.
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
HAVE YOU DECIDED WHAT YOU'RE GONNA DO AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

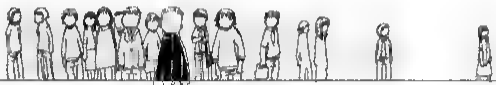
FOR STARTERS I WANNA LEAVE THE COUNTRY-SIDE AND GO SOMEPLACE WHERE THERE ARE ALL SORTS OF JOBS,
AND WHILE WORKING, DO SOME WRITING
A BOOK WITH MY NAME ON IT WILL LINE BOOKSTORE SHELVES
YOU REALLY DO LOVE BOOKS, HUH YOSHI-ZAWA
BUT I'LL JUST HALF-ASS MY DAY JOB
I like to take it easy
THAT SOUNDS LIKE YOU ALL RIGHT
YOSHI-ZAWA, I..
REALLY WISH I COULD BE LIKE YOU.
?
LIVING WHOLE-HEARTEDLY, LIKE YOU
?
What's with the suit?
FUJI-SHIMA?
I WANT TO,..
--BE LIKE YOU.



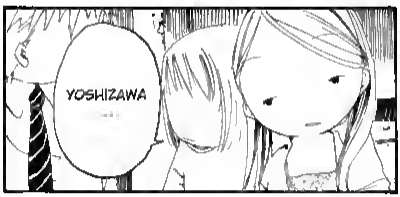


THE NEXT MORNING, THEY WERE BOTH GONE.

EVEN THOUGH IT'S SO HOT, HE LOOKS KIND OF PALE.
IS THAT FUJI-SHIMA?
HUH?
SO HOT



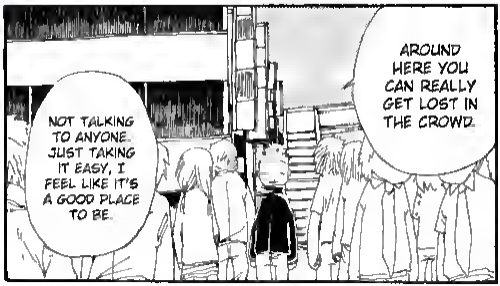
IT'S HARD TO TELL WHETHER THE PEOPLE AROUND HERE ARE LIVING OR DEAD.


YOSHIZAWA

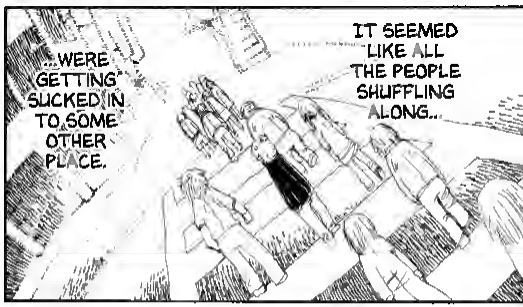
YOSHIZAWA
WHOA!

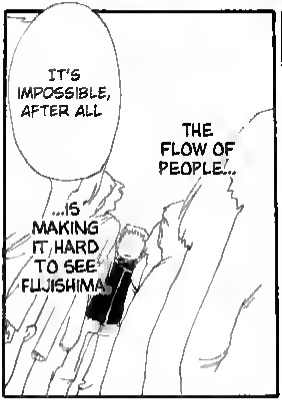
I SEE.
THEN YOU'RE ALL RIGHT...
YEAH.
DO SOME WRITING
DO YOU STILL HAVE THINGS YOU WANT TO DO?
HUH?
WHAT? GEEZ
FUJISHIMA ON THE OTHER SIDE ANYMORE ...
I DON'T SEE...

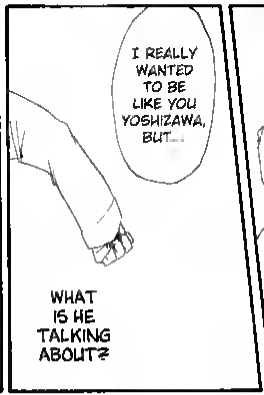
EEK!
SEND HIM OFF.
HEY
MOR-NING.
MOR-NING.
.....
WHAT THE HELL IS SHE DOING HERE...?
YOSHI-ZAWA?
BUSTLE BUSTLE
HOOOAH


NOT TALKING TO ANYONE. JUST TAKING IT EASY, I FEEL LIKE IT'S A GOOD PLACE TO BE.
AROUND HERE YOU CAN REALLY GET LOST IN THE CROWD.
HUSH
FUJI-SHIMA.
HUSH

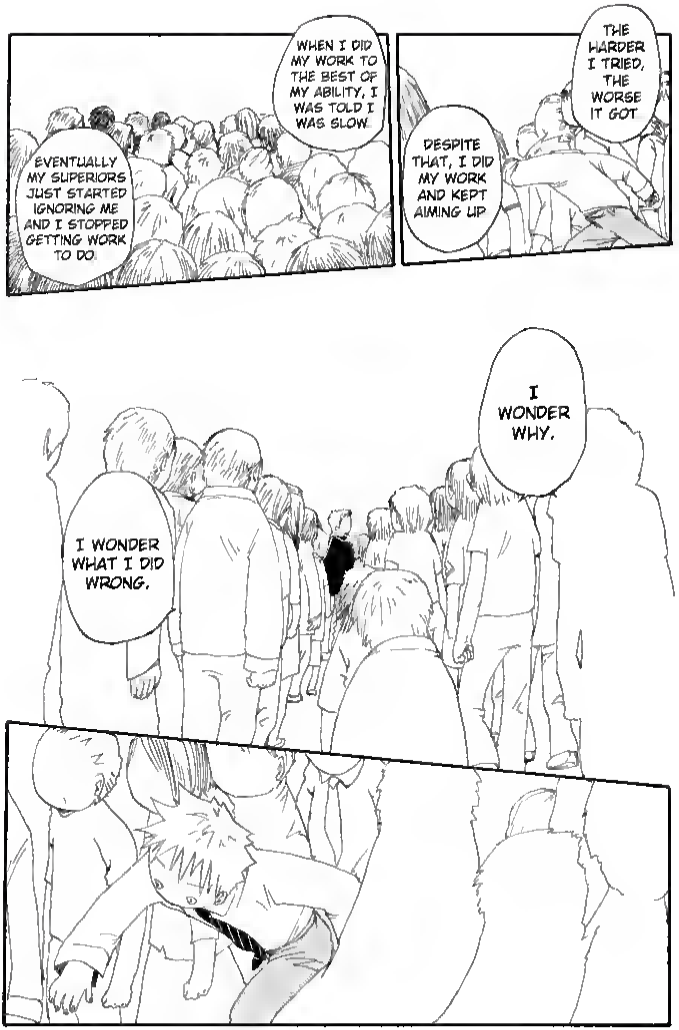
YOSHI-ZAWA, YOU KNOW, I...
I CAN'T DO IT, AFTER ALL.


...WERE GETTING SUCKED IN TO SOME OTHER PLACE.
IT SEEMED LIKE ALL THE PEOPLE SHUFFLING ALONG...

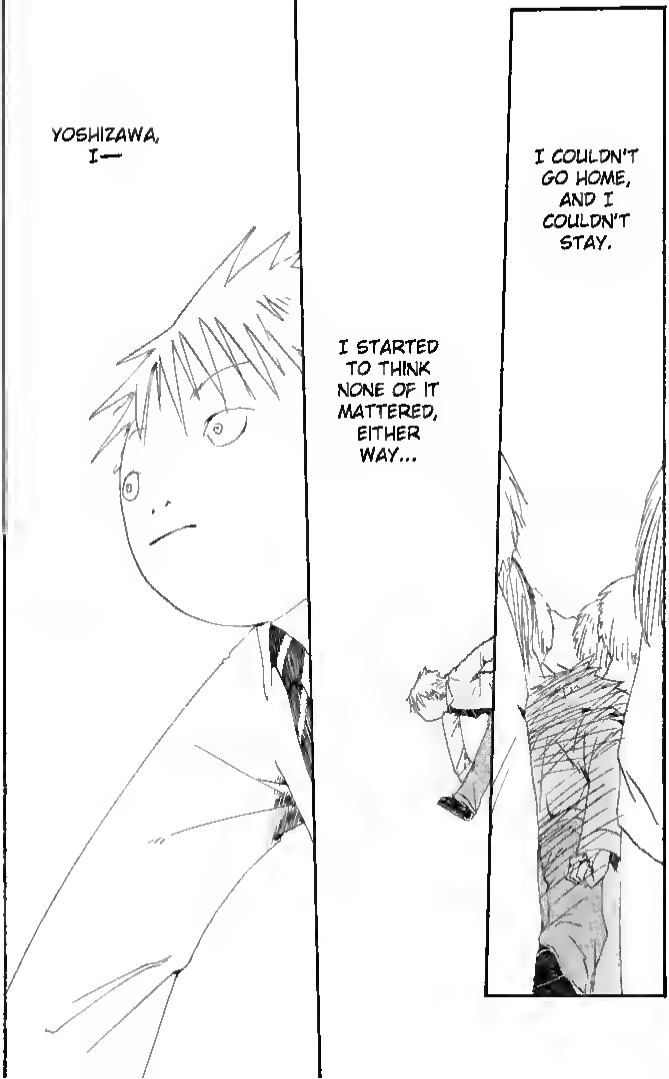

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE, AFTER ALL
THE FLOW OF PEOPLE...
...IS MAKING IT HARD TO SEE FUJISHIMA.

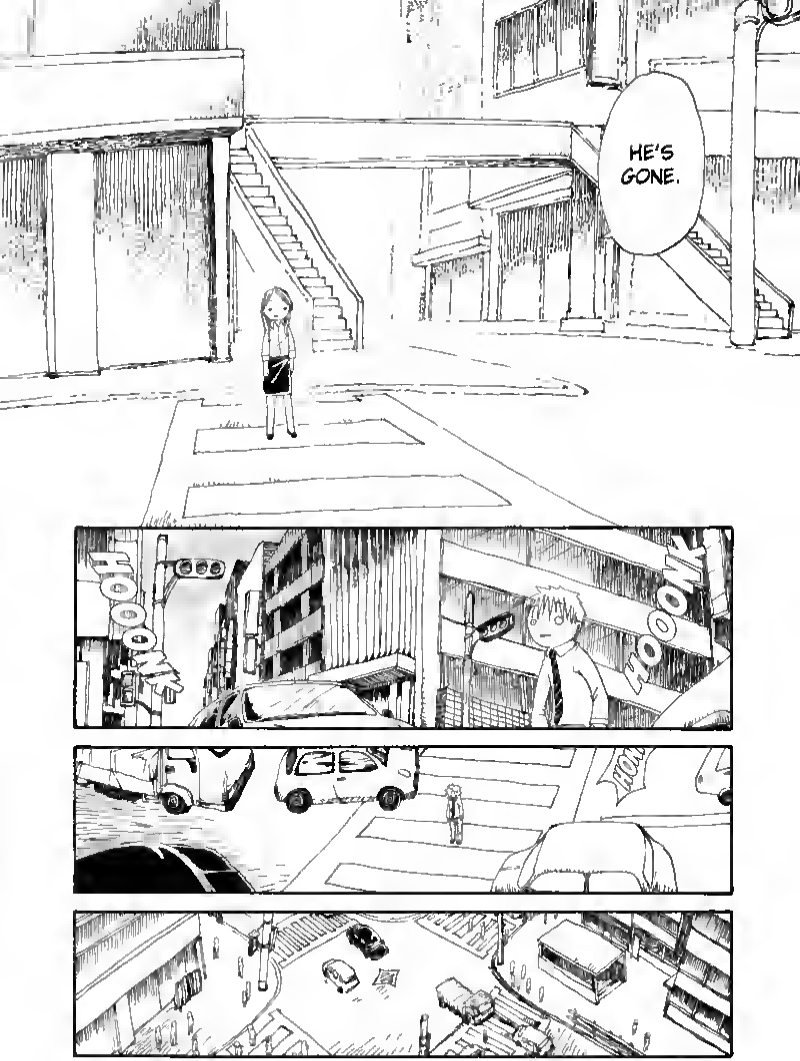

I REALLY WANTED TO BE LIKE YOU YOSHIZAWA, BUT...
WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? HEY!!


WHEN I DID MY WORK TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY, I WAS TOLD I WAS SLOW.
EVENTUALLY MY SUPERIORS JUST STARTED IGNORING ME AND I STOPPED GETTING WORK TO DO.
THE HARDER I TRIED, THE WORSE IT GOT.
DESPITE THAT, I DID MY WORK AND KEPT AIMING UP
I WONDER WHY.
I WONDER WHAT I DID WRONG.

FUJISHIMA, YOU'RE JUST TRYING TOO HARD...
IT'LL BE FINE IF YOU TAKE A HANDS-OFF APPROACH.
YOU KNOW...
EVER SINCE I CAME HERE A LOT'S HAPPENED BUT IN THE END NOTHING'S CHANGED
AND IN THAT TIME I LOST SIGHT OF MYSELF.
ALL I COULD THINK ABOUT WAS HOW I LOOKED TO OTHER PEOPLE
HE'S GRADUALLY GETTING CARRIED AWAY.
THINKING, "I WON'T JUST INHERIT MY PARENT'S HOUSE." "I'LL FIND SOMETHING I REALLY WANT TO DO."
THE AMOUNT OF PEOPLE IS INCREASING.
I ONLY CAME HER SO I COULD GET CLOSER TO BEING LIKE YOU.
FUJISHIMA, I HAD FORGOTTEN. UNTIL YOU REMINDED ME, I DIDN'T EVEN REMEMBER.
YOSHIZAWA... DON'T LAUGH AT ME, BUT...

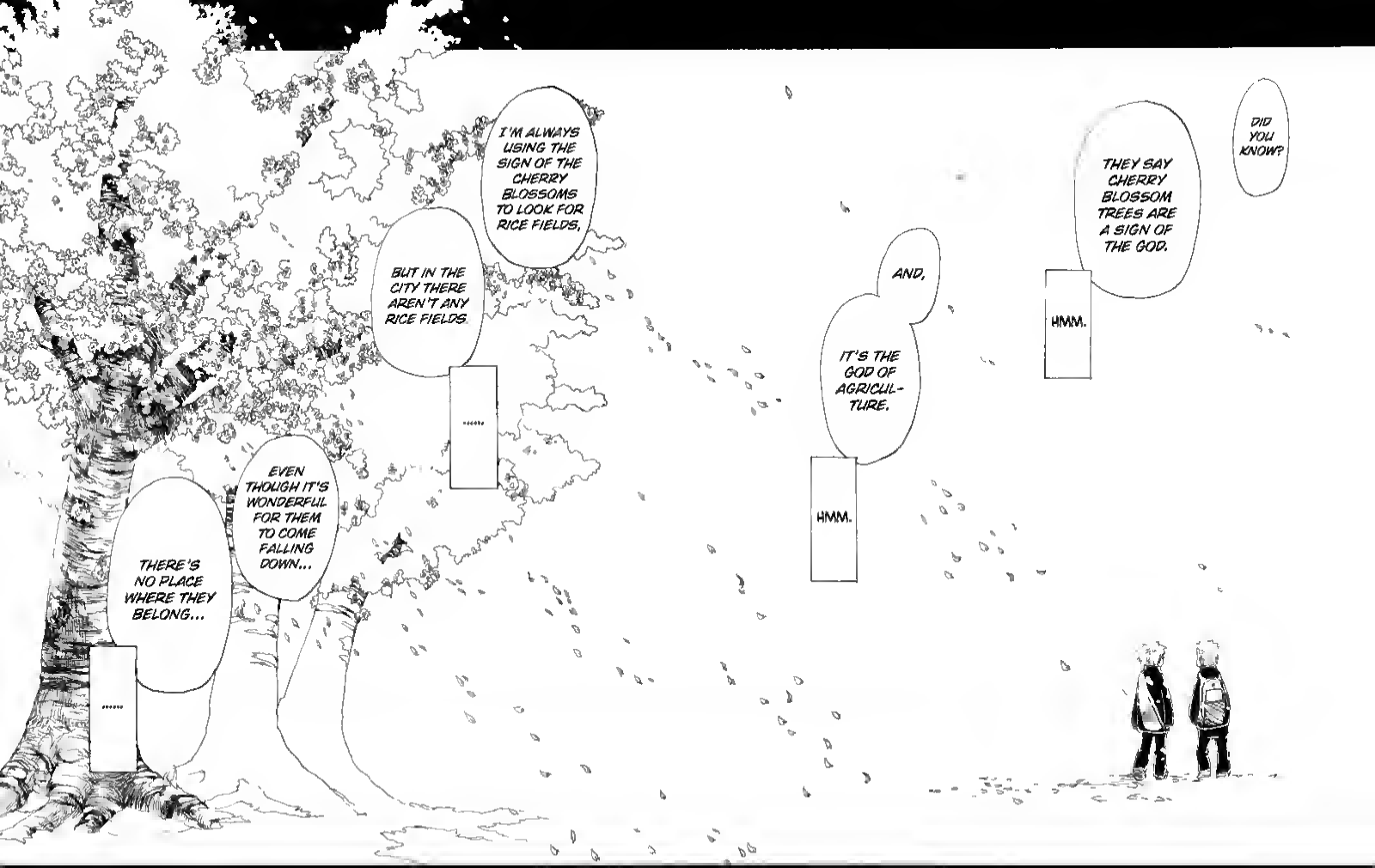

YOSHIZAWA, I—
I STARTED TO THINK NONE OF IT MATTERED, EITHER WAY...
I COULDN'T GO HOME, AND I COULDN'T STAY.

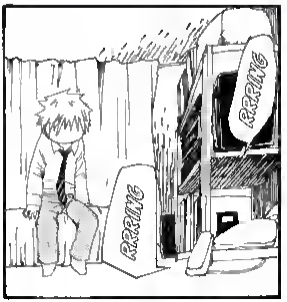

HE'S GONE.
HOONK
HOONK
HONK

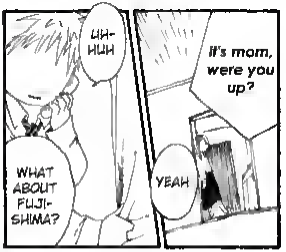
I WASN'T ABLE TO SEND HIM OFF.
SATSUKI-S..N.
EARLIER YOU SAID SOME-THING ABOUT NOT BEING ABLE TO FIND YOUR WAY HOME.

A LONG TIME AGO, FUJISHIMA SAID..
THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS THAT GOT STUCK IN MY BOOK.
DID YOU GET BROUGHT HERE ALONG WITH THEM?

YOSHI-ZAWA,


DID YOU KNOW?
THEY SAY CHERRY BLOSSOM TREES ARE A SIGN OF THE GOD.
HMM.
AND,
IT'S THE GOD OF AGRICUL-TURE.
HMM.
I'M ALWAYS USING THE SIGN OF THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS TO LOOK FOR RICE FIELDS.
BUT IN THE CITY THERE AREN'T ANY RICE FIELDS.
.....
EVEN THOUGH IT'S WONDERFUL FOR THEM TO COME FALLING DOWN...
THERE'S NO PLACE WHERE THEY BELONG...
.....





...IS WHAT I THINK HE MUMBLED BACK THEN.

"YOU KNOW, I TOO...

WANTED SOMEWHERE TO BELONG..."

YEAH, YEAH...
LATER.
...that after coming back here they'll commit suicide.
GOT IT, I'M HANGING UP NOW.
You should come back home already
I feel so sorry for his parents.
It's become a big topic of gossip around here
He jumped to his death They said it was going to be a long-term hospitalization
Everyone's saying how people change after going to Tokyo.
WORTHLESS PERSON,
YOU HAVE THINGS YOU WANT TO DO, RIGHT?
SATSUKI ..?
I MIGHT BE TOLD IT'S TRIVIAL, BUT... I'LL WRITE...
ACCUMULATE LOTS OF TRIVIAL THINGS ..
I'LL SEARCH FOR LOTS OF INTERESTING THINGS
...I DO.
fluff
Somehow huge
I'll try look for people like

IN ORDER TO MAKE THIS THE PLACE I BELONG, THERE'S A LOT OF THINGS I HAVE TO DO..
THANK YOU.

Kumo

Translation,
Scans & Editing

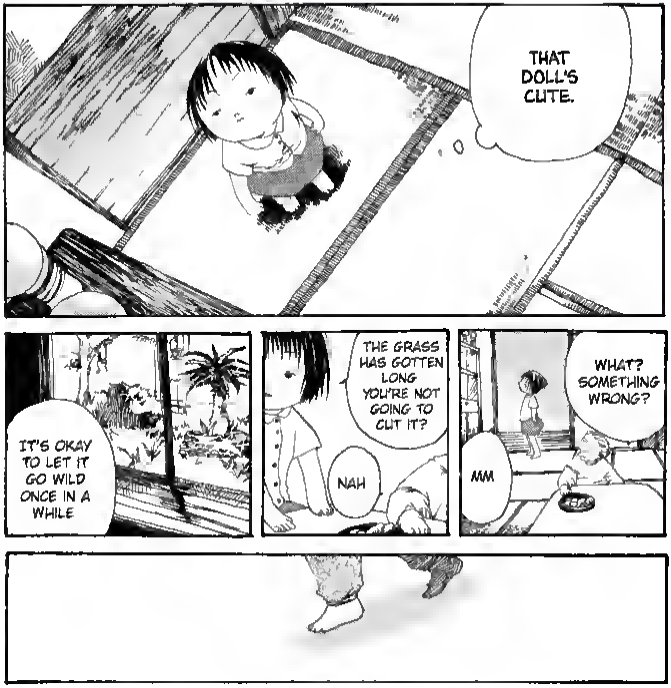
AT THE ENTRANCE IS A VERY LARGE...

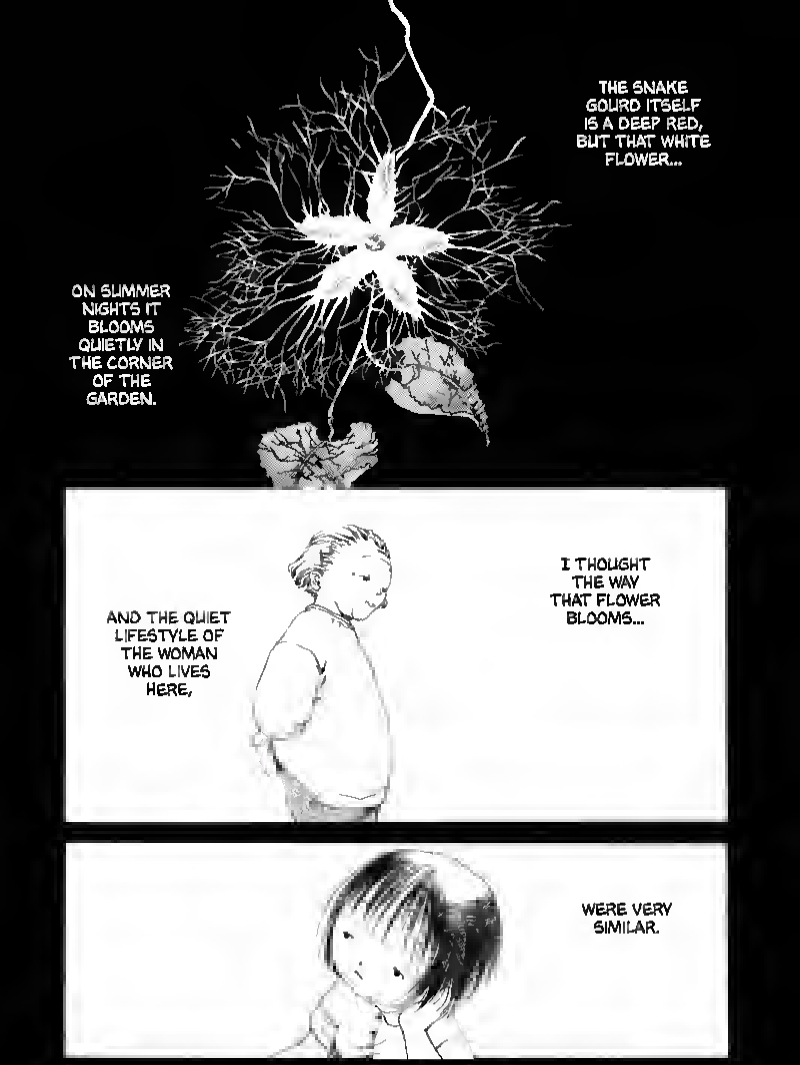
PALM TREE.

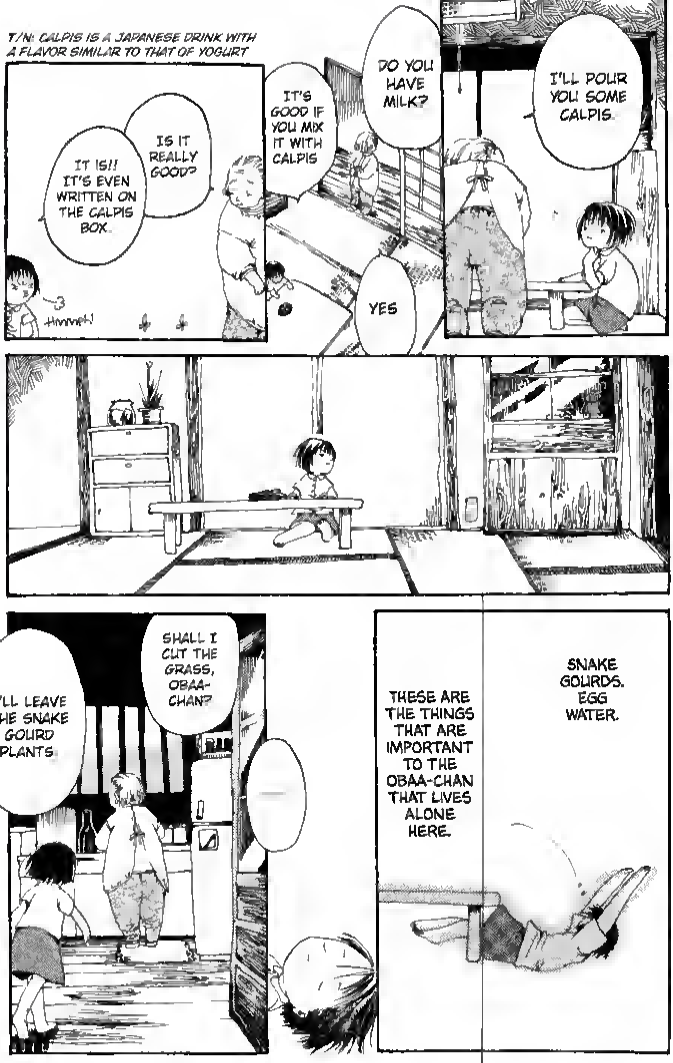
Egg Water

OBAA-CHAN, LET ME HAVE A DRINK OF WATER!
THE WATER AT THAT HOUSE WAS VERY COOL AND TASTED LIKE EGGS.
I'D OFTEN STOP BY ON MY WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL.
I OFTEN CAME HERE TO PLAY.
THE LADY WHO LIVED THERE ALONE WASN'T A RELATION, AND WASN'T REALLY CONNECTED TO ME IN ANY WAY, BUT...
I LOVED THIS PLACE.

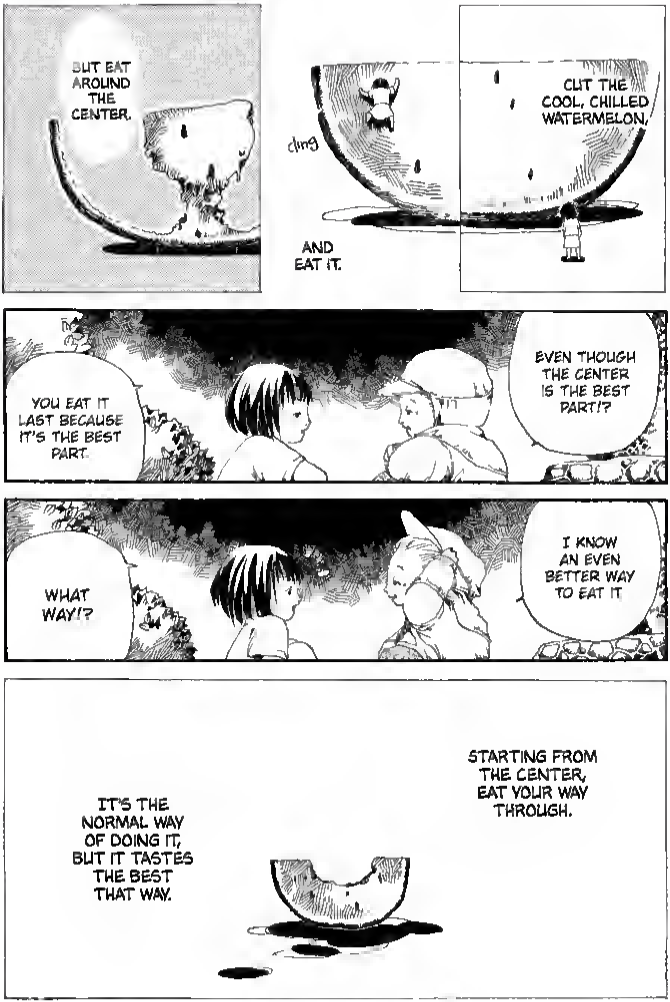
OH, COME ON IN.
EH!?
THEY'RE GOING TO FORBID FURTHER USE OF THE WELL WATER.
YOU KNOW TODAY I WAS CONTACTED BY THE TOWN HALL...
IT'S HOT OUT THERE, ISN'T IT?
YEAH
EGG WATER. WATER THAT TASTES LIKE EGGS
INSTEAD, SHE HAS ROWS AND ROWS OF DOLLS.
OBAA-CHAN DOESN'T HAVE ANY CHILDREN.
THE WATER FROM HERE TASTES MORE LIKE MEDICINE.


THAT DOLL'S CUTE.
WHAT? SOMETHING WRONG?
MM
THE GRASS HAS GOTTEN LONG YOU'RE NOT GOING TO CUT IT?
NAH
IT'S OKAY TO LET IT GO WILD ONCE IN A WHILE
THAT WAY, IN AUTUMN, SNAKE GOURDS WILL GROW...


THE SNAKE GOURD ITSELF IS A DEEP RED, BUT THAT WHITE FLOWER...
ON SUMMER NIGHTS IT BLOOMS QUIETLY IN THE CORNER OF THE GARDEN.
AND THE QUIET LIFESTYLE OF THE WOMAN WHO LIVES HERE,
I THOUGHT THE WAY THAT FLOWER BLOOMS...
WERE VERY SIMILAR.

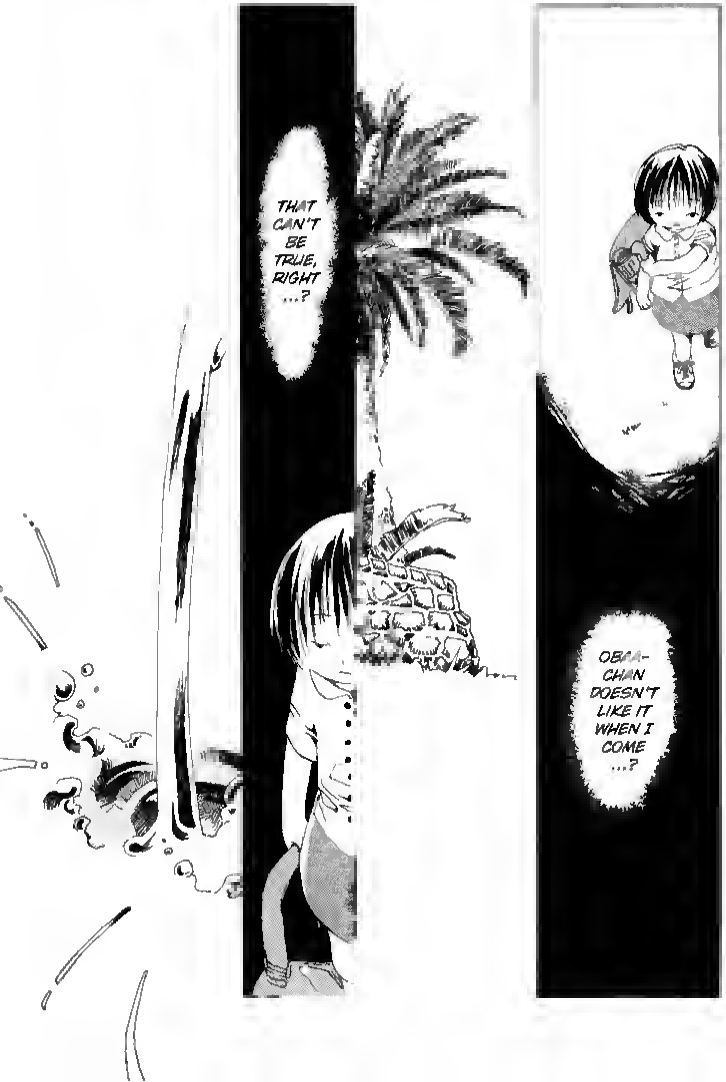

T/N: CALPIS IS A JAPANESE DRINK WITH A FLAVOR SIMILAR TO THAT OF YOGURT
I'LL POUR YOU SOME CALPIS.
DO YOU HAVE MILK?
YES
IT'S GOOD IF YOU MIX IT WITH CALPIS
IS IT REALLY GOOD?
IT IS!! IT'S EVEN WRITTEN ON THE CALPIS BOX.
Hmmm!
SHALL I CUT THE GRASS, OBAA-CHAN?
I'LL LEAVE THE SNAKE GOURD PLANTS.
THESE ARE THE THINGS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO THE OBAA-CHAN THAT LIVES ALONE HERE.
SNAKE GOURDS. EGG WATER.

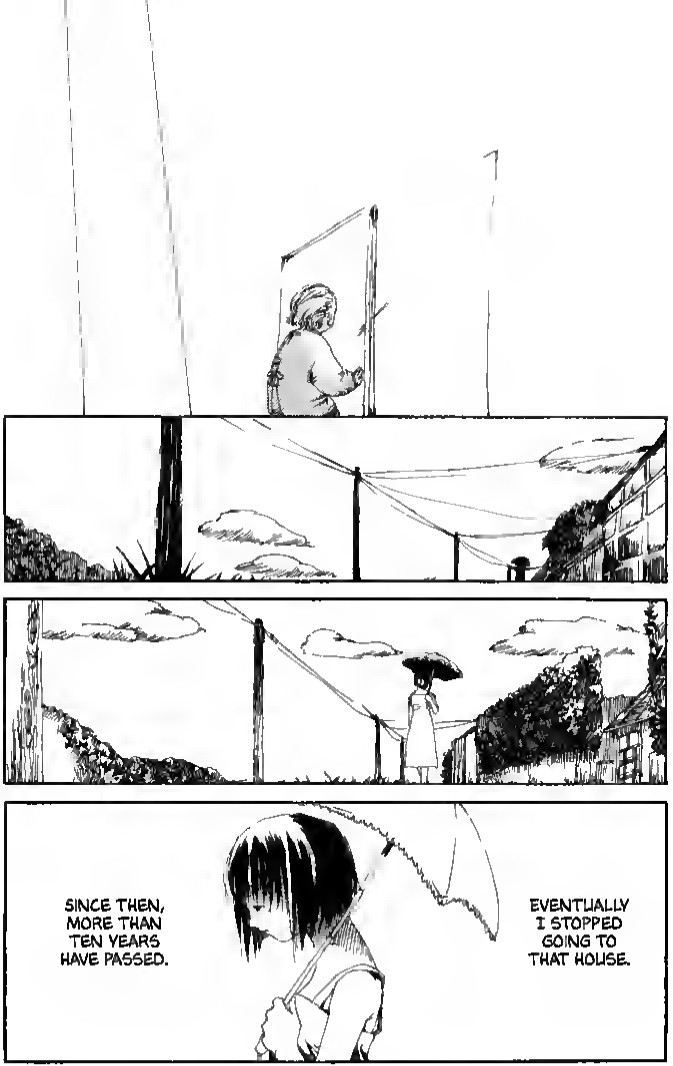
TAP WATER DOESN'T TASTE GOOD.
I DON'T WANT THEM TO BLOCK OFF THE WELL WATER
† Gajin clothes
IF YOU'RE GOING TO EAT A CHILLED WATERMELON, THERE'S A WAY TO EAT IT THAT MAKES IT TASTE ESPECIALLY GOOD.
IF YOU CHILL IT WITH COOL WATER,
IT'S EVEN MORE DELICIOUS.
SERI-OUSLY? YAY!
THAT'S TRUE BUT THE WATER COMES FROM UNDER-GROUND, SO IT CAN'T BE HELPED.
OH, RIGHT! SHALL I CHILL A WATER-MELON?

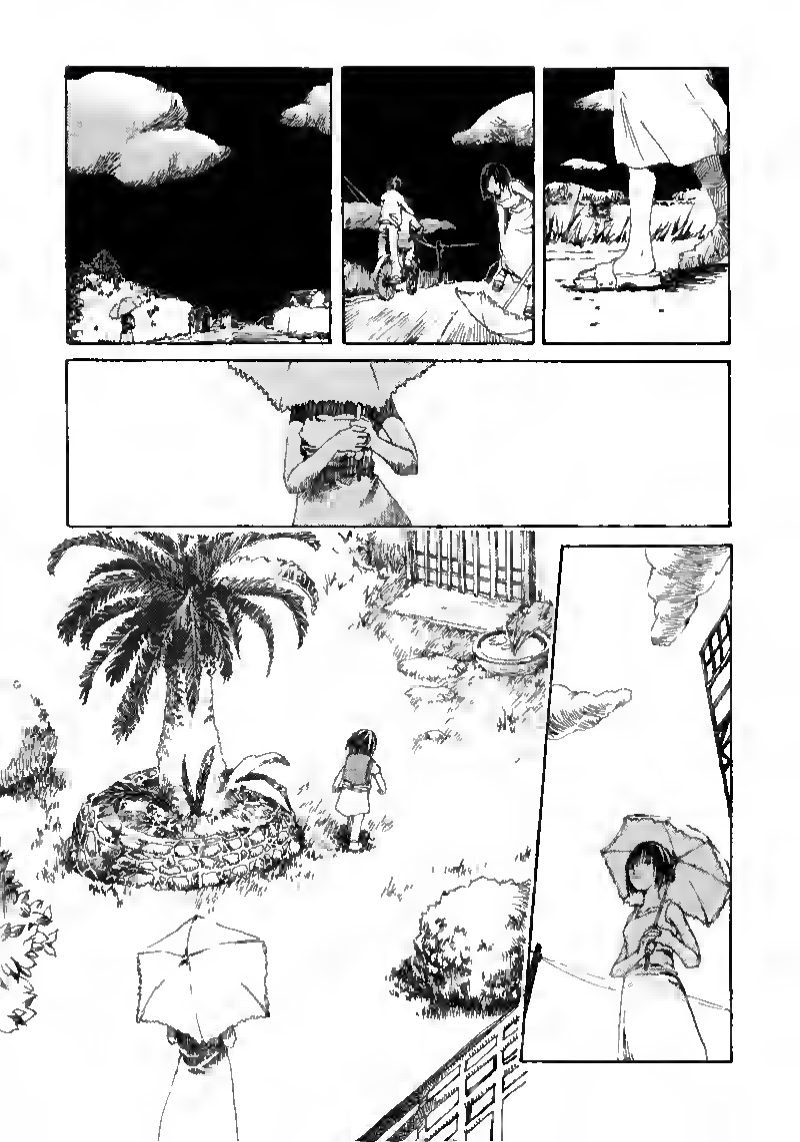

BUT EAT AROUND THE CENTER.
CUT THE COOL, CHILLED WATERMELON,
cling
AND EAT IT.
YOU EAT IT LAST BECAUSE IT'S THE BEST PART.
EVEN THOUGH THE CENTER IS THE BEST PART!?
WHAT WAY!?
I KNOW AN EVEN BETTER WAY TO EAT IT
STARTING FROM THE CENTER, EAT YOUR WAY THROUGH.
IT'S THE NORMAL WAY OF DOING IT, BUT IT TASTES THE BEST THAT WAY.

I WONDER
BUT YOU KNOW, I THINK THE NORMAL WAY OF EATING IT IS THE BEST
MM
YES, IT IS
BUT THE CENTER'S THE BEST PART.
SO DON'T YOU WANT TO SAVE IT FOR LAST?
NOW, LET'S EAT
THE WATER AT OBAA-CHAN'S PLACE REALLY IS GOOD.
I'M SURE THE SNAKE GOURD PLANTS WE LEFT IN THE GARDEN GREW IN AUTUMN.
HER FACE REMINDED ME AGAIN OF THE SNAKE GOURD FLOWERS.
HER CONTENT FACE, AFTER SHE ATE THAT WATERMELON.

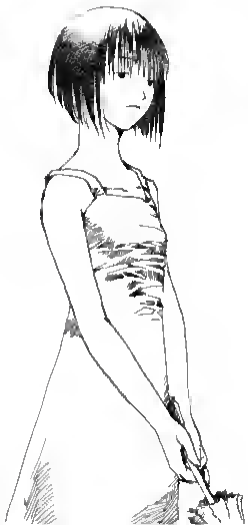
MOOOM!
OH, DEAR.
I STOPPED BY THE PALM TREE HOUSE AGAIN TODAY.
YOU HAVE TO STOP GOING!
I'M SURE YOU'RE BOTHERING HER.


OBAA-CHAN DOESN'T LIKE IT WHEN I COME ...?
THAT CAN'T BE TRUE, RIGHT ...?

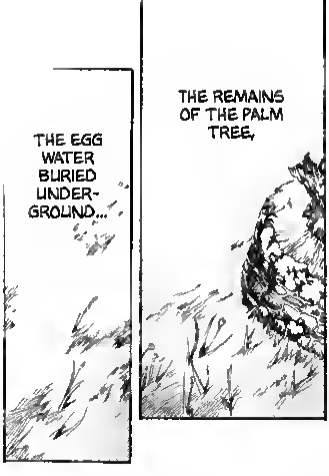

SINCE THEN, MORE THAN TEN YEARS HAVE PASSED.
EVENTUALLY I STOPPED GOING TO THAT HOUSE.



OBAA-CHAN
IS NO LONGER
HERE.



THE FLOWERS OF THE SNAKE GOURD THAT NO ONE GOT TO SEE...



...ARE ALL WAITING FOR THAT IMPORTANT PERSON TO COME HOME.

From one of IKKI's most promising talents comes a little street-corner fairy tale!

ホッピーズベア

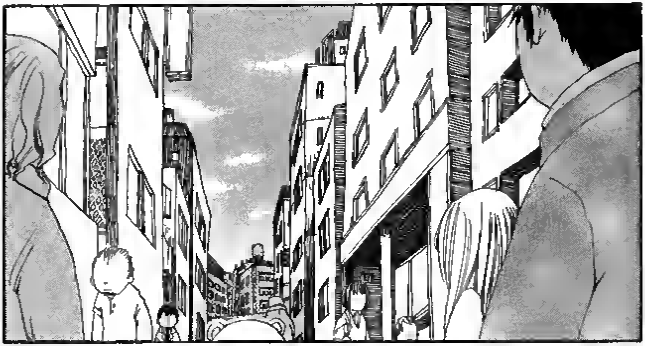
Hoppie's Bear

● 7th IKIMAN Award winner ●

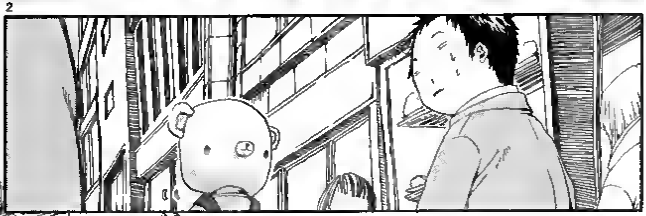
岩岡ヒサエ

Hisae Iwaoka

One day I came across a "little bear" at the usual street corner
It was carrying a satchel on its back. And then -- it fell



2



GC BY ERUTAN

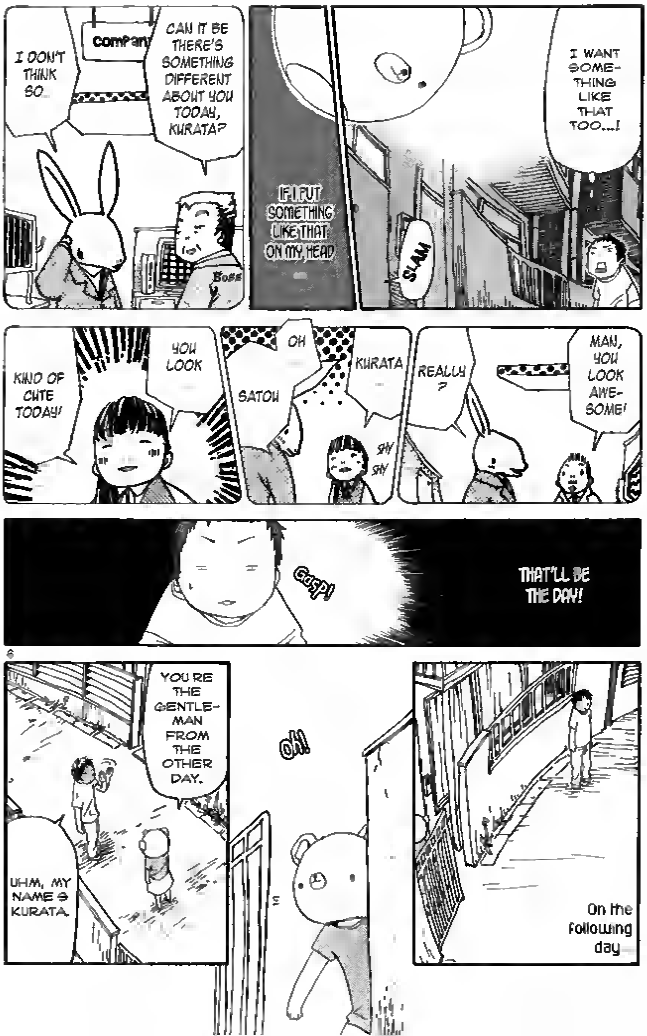
Kotonoha
KOTONOHA MONKEY PUNTE.COM

ホッピーズベア

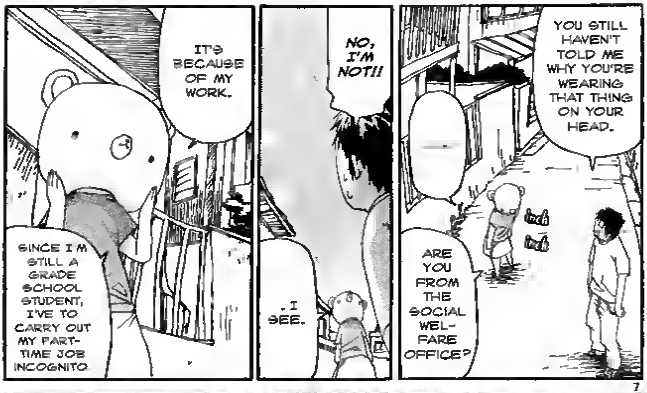
WHO ARE YOU?
I WANTED TO ASK YOU THE SAME QUESTION.
CAN YOU GET UP?
WHAT TIME IS IT?
HALF PAST TEN
UH, WHY ARE YOU WEARING THAT THING ON YOUR HEAD?
PARDON ?
A STU-DENT ?
EEEK!
I'M LATE FOR SCHOOL.
GOOD BYE .
MIS-TER .
AH, I'VE TO GO NOW.
BOO!
OH NO, I FORGOT TO TAKE IT OFF AGAIN.

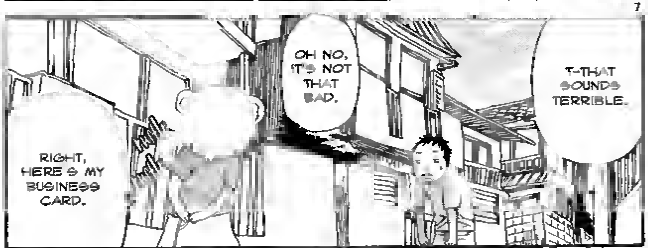
GOOD BYE
PLEASE
GO OUT WITH ME
SATOU
THANK YOU VERY MUCH
I'M ALREADY DATING SOMEONE
SORRY, BUT I CAN'T.
GEE, AFTER WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY
I SHOULD JUST CALL IN SICK TODAY AND GO HOME.
SIGH
WELL THEN... PLEASE EXCUSE ME!
GOOD BYE

GOING OUT MIGHT HELP MY MOOD A BIT.
OR MAYBE NOT I CAN'T HIDE MYSELF FROM HER FOREVER
All right!
I'D RATHER NOT RUN INTO SATOU FOR THE TIME BEING.
GLOOMY
GUESS I SHOULD TAKE TOMORROW OFF TOO.
A STARLESS NIGHT.
OH
Whoa


I DON'T THINK SO...
Company
CAN IT BE THERE'S SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT YOU TODAY, KURATA?
Boss
IF I PUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT ON MY HEAD
SLAM
I WANT SOME-THING LIKE THAT TOO...!
KIND OF CUTE TODAY!
YOU LOOK
OH
SATOU
KURATA
SHY SHY
REALLY ?
MAN, YOU LOOK AWE-SOME!
Gasp!
THAT'LL BE THE DAY!
6
YOU'RE THE GENTLE-MAN FROM THE OTHER DAY.
UH-HM, MY NAME'S KURATA.
O.H.
On the following day...

ホッピーズベア


IT'S BECAUSE OF MY WORK.
SINCE I'M STILL A GRADE SCHOOL STUDENT, I'VE TO CARRY OUT MY PART-TIME JOB INCOGNITO
NO, I'M NOT!!
..I SEE.
YOU STILL HAVEN'T TOLD ME WHY YOU'RE WEARING THAT THING ON YOUR HEAD.
ARE YOU FROM THE SOCIAL WELFARE OFFICE?


OH NO, IT'S NOT THAT BAD.
T-THAT SOUNDS TERRIBLE.
RIGHT, HERE'S MY BUSINESS CARD.

BYE.

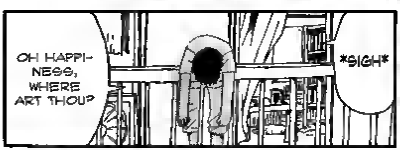
IF YOU FEEL LIKE IT, PLEASE PAY US A VISIT SOMETIME.
Hoppie
Public Relations
AKEBI
reach

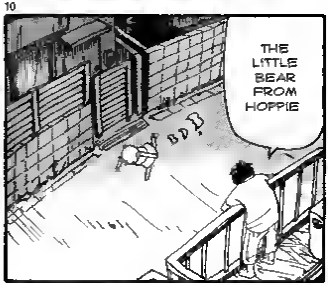
WEL-COME!
PLEASE VISIT THE HOPPIE.
Hoppie
PLEASE VISIT THE HOPPIE.
HOP
WE SERVE WESTERN DISHES.
PLEASE VISIT THE HOPPIE
DAD.
OH...
AKE-BI...
LET'S CHAN-GE.
SHOCK!
A WORKING STUDENT, HUH...

OUR WEST-ERN-STYLE MEALS TASTE GREAT
PLEASE VISIT THE HOPPIE
YOU'D BETTER RELEASE YOUR KID!
FURIOUS
?
HMPF
FATHER BEAR!
?
3
HERE YOU GO.
DO YOU KNOW OF THE HOPPIE, SIR?
OH, THANKS.
300-YEN
BOW

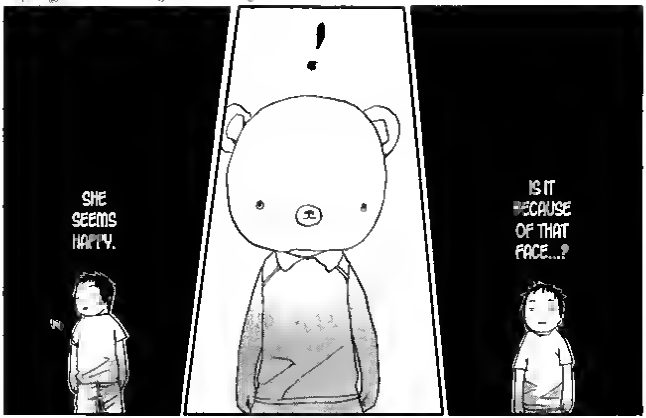
...MY LOVELY SATOU.

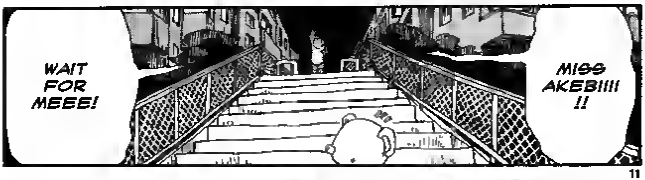
NOT GOOD, I'VE GOTTA SHOW UP AT WORK SOON

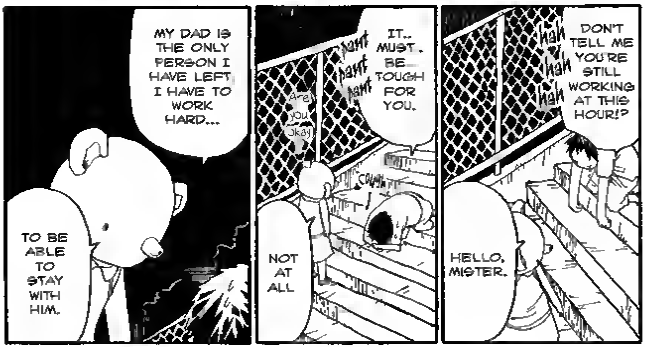

OH HAPPI-NESS, WHERE ART THOU?
SIGH

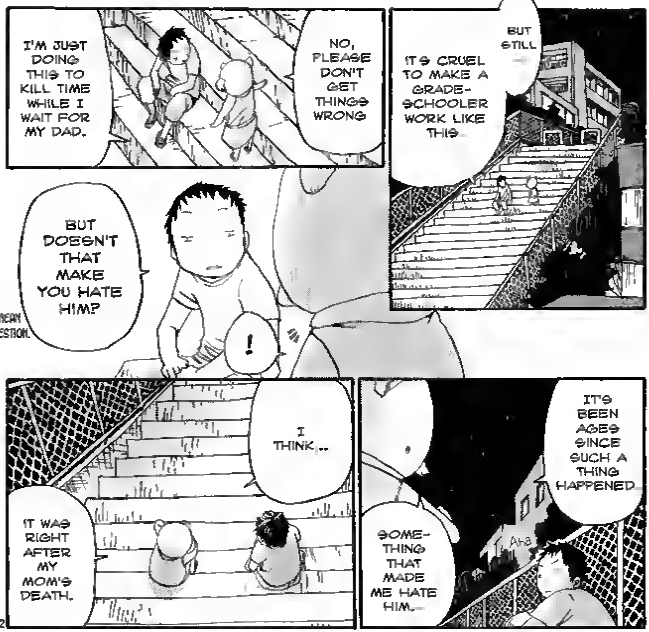

THE LITTLE BEAR FROM HOPPIE

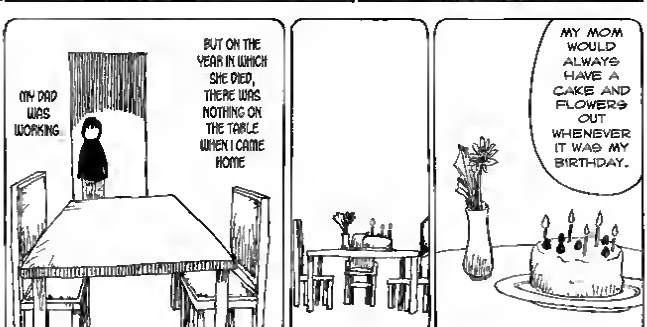
HMM?

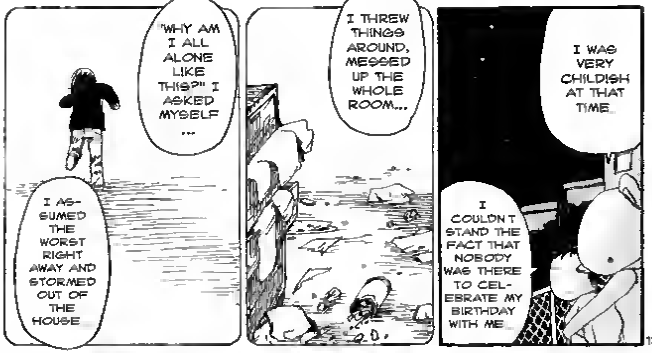

SHE SEEMS HAPPY.
!
IS IT BECAUSE OF THAT FACE...?


WAIT FOR MEEE!
MISS AKEBI!!!!!

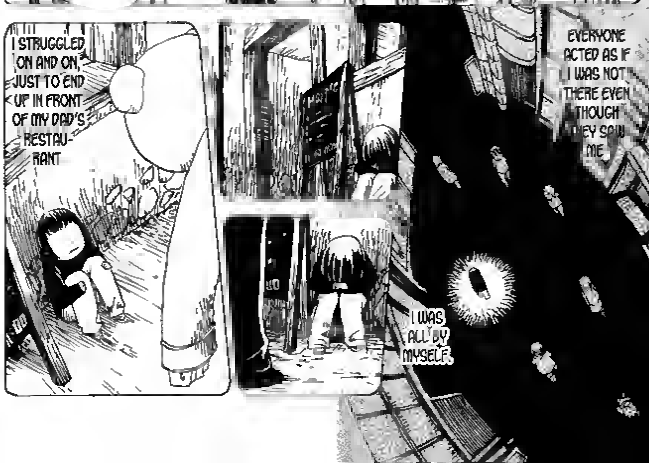

MY DAD IS THE ONLY FERSON I HAVE LEFT I HAVE TO WORK HARD...
TO BE ABLE TO STAY WITH HIM.
IT.. MUST.. BE... TOUGH FOR YOU.
ARE YOU OKAY?
NOT AT ALL
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE STILL WORKING AT THIS HOUR!?
HELLO, MISTER.


I'M JUST DOING THIS TO KILL TIME WHILE I WAIT FOR MY DAD.
NO, PLEASE DON'T GET THINGS WRONG
IT'S CRUEL TO MAKE A GRADE-SCHOOLER WORK LIKE THIS...
BUT STILL...
BUT DOESN'T THAT MAKE YOU HATE HIM?
MEAN QUESTION.
!
I THINK...
IT WAS RIGHT AFTER MY MOM'S DEATH.
IT'S BEEN AGES SINCE SUCH A THING HAPPENED...
SOME-THING THAT MADE ME HATE HIM...
AHH...


MY DAD WAS WORKING.
BUT ON THE YEAR IN WHICH SHE DIED, THERE WAS NOTHING ON THE TABLE WHEN I CAME HOME
MY MOM WOULD ALWAYS HAVE A CAKE AND FLOWERS OUT WHENEVER IT WAS MY BIRTHDAY.


I ASSUMED THE WORST RIGHT AWAY AND STORMED OUT OF THE HOUSE.
"WHY AM I ALL ALONE LIKE THIS?" I ASKED MYSELF ...
I THREW THINGS AROUND, MESSED UP THE WHOLE ROOM...
I COULDN'T STAND THE FACT THAT NOBODY WAS THERE TO CELEBRATE MY BIRTHDAY WITH ME.
I WAS VERY CHILDISH AT THAT TIME.

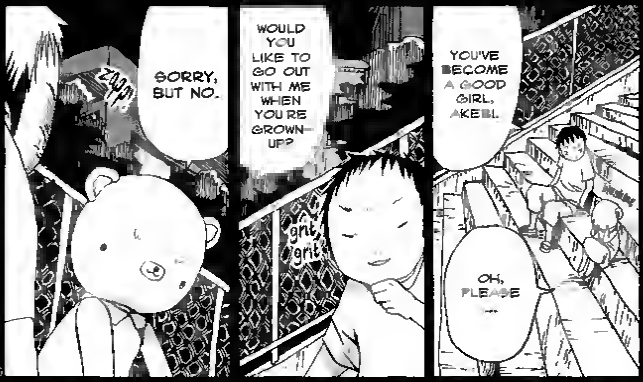
THE SURROUNDINGS CHANGED THE MOMENT I TOOK THE FIRST STEP OUTSIDE.
I WAS LOOKING FOR A PLACE THAT'D MAKE MY LONELINESS COMPLETE.


I STRUGGLED ON AND ON, JUST TO END UP IN FRONT OF MY DAD'S RESTAURANT
EVERYONE ACTED AS IF I WAS NOT THERE EVEN THOUGH THEY SAW ME.
I WAS ALL BY MYSELF.

I'M SORRY.
DAD...
DAD...
WHEN I GOT HOME I FOUND TWO SMALL CAKES IN THE FRIDGE.
AND THEN
I FINALLY REALIZED.
WHAT?

ホッピーズ ベア

HAPPI-NESS WILL NEVER FIND YOU.
IF YOU DON'T TAKE NOTICE OF THE HAPPY THINGS YOU DO HAVE..
AS FOR ME ...
I'M HAPPY NOW

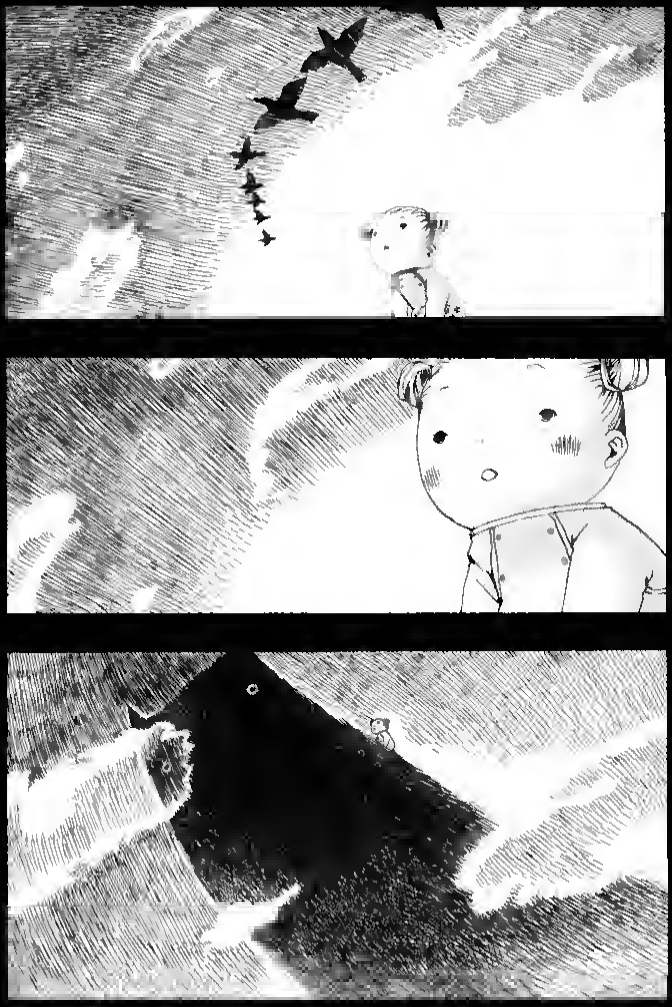

SORRY, BUT NO.
ZOOP
WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO OUT WITH ME WHEN YOU'RE GROWN-UP?
grit grit
YOU'VE BECOME A GOOD GIRL, AKEMI.
OH, PLEASE...

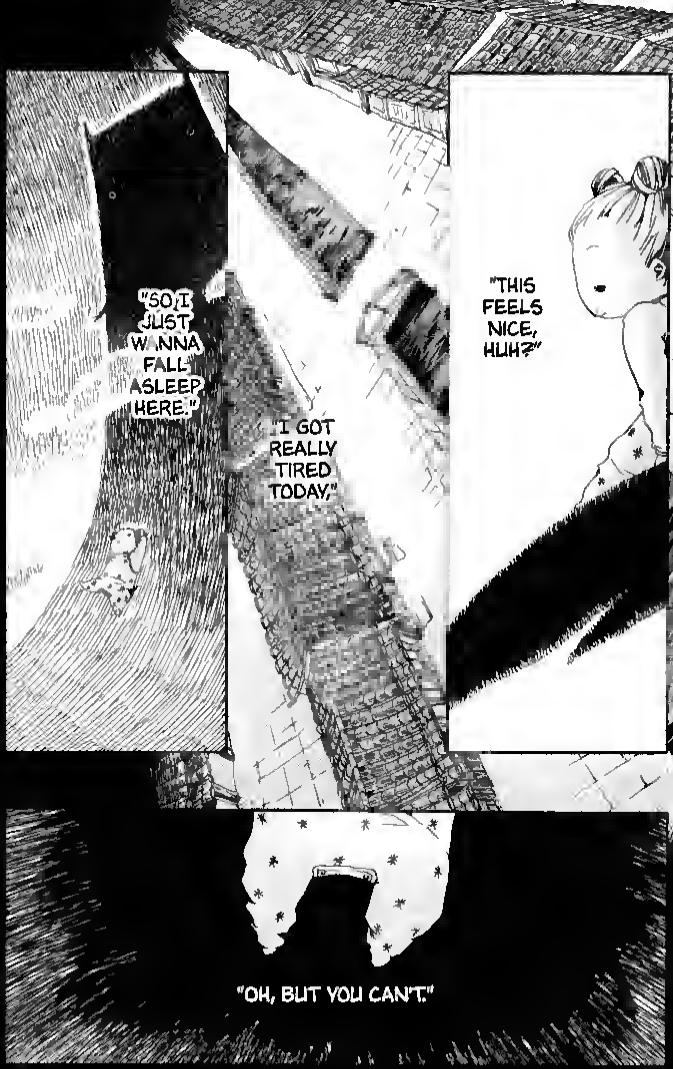
HOPPIE'S BEAR — END —
Don't miss Hisae Iwaoka's next work!

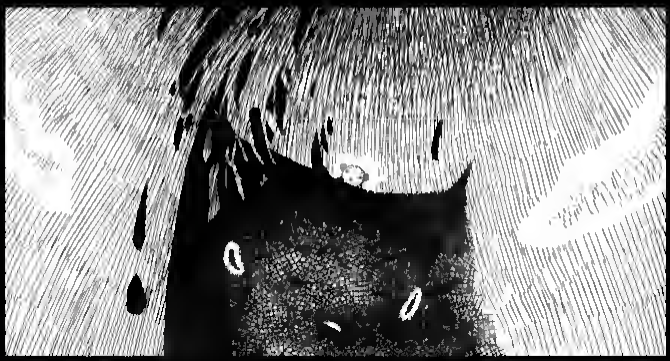
Kumo

Translation,
Scans & Editing

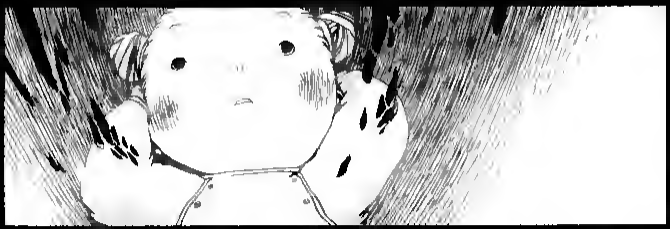
"To a
Certain
Place"




"THIS FEELS NICE, HUH?"
"I GOT REALLY TIRED TODAY,"
"SO I JUST WANNA FALL ASLEEP HERE."
"OH, BUT YOU CAN'T."

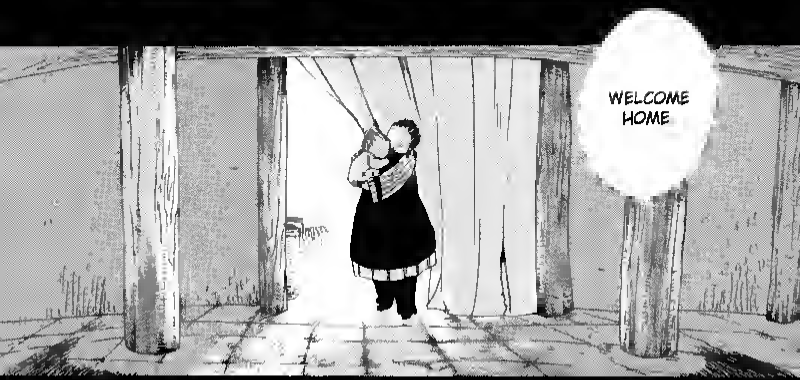


"I'M SURE THERE'S..."



"A MUCH WARMER PLACE FOR YOU."

-THUMP-



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江上英樹様 平井和正様
葛西恵様 あと松山ケ様。

作品初出

「むかしむかし」……同人誌「むかしのほん」04年5月発行
マタ今度ネ……同人誌「マタ今度ネ」00年12月発行
こあくまとよる……同人誌「こあくまとよる」02年8月発行
骨董屋さくら堂……同人誌「幸（ゆき）」03年8月発行
しろいくも……月刊ＩＫＫＩ04年7月号掲載（第6回イッキ新人賞「イキマン」受賞作）
ヒミズの丘……同人誌「ヒミズの丘」02年8月発行
夢の国……同人誌「ゆめの底」02年8月発行
ぶどう摘み……同人誌「ぶどう摘み」01年12月発行
おウチに帰ろう……同人誌「むかしのほん」04年5月発行
はなのはなし……同人誌「幸（ゆき）」03年8月発行
花の咲く道……同人誌「幸（ゆき）」03年8月発行
たまごの水……ファンロード（大都社）01年9月号掲載
ホッピーズベア……月刊ＩＫＫＩ04年10月号掲載
「在るところへ」……描きおろし